Ānanda Maitrēya, bhikkhu

THE RELIGION OF BURMA

AND OTHER PAPERS

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BY

A[illegible] BENNETT

(BH[illegible] YA)

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INTRODUCTORY

The author of these essays was a combination of two faculties which, in any high degree, are rarely found in one and the same mind. Early in life he had obtained a training in Chemistry and Physics, and soon found that he had a strong bent to those sciences, which, with opportunity in proportion to his ability, he would certainly have pursued with eagerness.

Yet he was also a true poet. Not that he wrote much in metre, though his beautiful verses entitled *The Word of the Buddha* make one wonder that he did not write more. One can hardly turn a page of his prose essays without coming across some passage which is instinct with the imaginative expression that is the very essence of poetry. Like other poets, however, he had his growth, his culmination,

and his decline, his power being at its maximum from 1902 till 1912.

Rightly indeed have the Buddhists of the East decided that these inspiring writings shall not be consigned to the oblivion which overtakes back-numbers of journals, but made accessible to the world in the form of a volume. For the whole of the powers of this remarkable man were devoted to one single object: to the exposition of the Dhamma in such a manner that it could be assimilated by the peoples of the West. Not, indeed, that we could ever forget that the powers of the great Rhys Davids were devoted, with no less singleness of aim, to that same purpose; nor forget that it was the work of Rhys Davids that made possible the work of Ananda Metteyya. But Rhys Davids was a scholar, and the scholar is not properly the advocate: indeed, if he be, his scholarship comes under suspicion, possibly even into peril.

Ananda Metteyya is frankly the advocate, and what an advocate! Ages have passed since the Dhamma has been set forth with such power, and who can tell when it will be so set forth again?

When this volume reaches the western world, there will, of course, be criticism, two points of which it may be well to anticipate. One is on a matter of style; for it may be admitted that our author's sentences are often involved and hyperparenthetic, his metaphors occasionally somewhat redundant.

The other is a little more serious, for it involves a question of scholarship. Has he, like so many western expositors, introduced into his expositions modern ideas of his own? That indeed, in itself, is a perfectly legitimate proceeding. Any man is free to construct what seems to him an ideal system, by combining ancient ideas with modern ones. What is illegitimate is to call the combination

by a single, usually an ancient, name. Now it cannot be denied that our author thus applies the term "Buddhism," and scholarship may here and there find him guilty. Indeed, it is difficult to avoid a suspicion that some of the compilers of the *Pitakas* would be mightily astonished, could they see the towering structures which he, with a chemistry and physics whereof they never dreamed, with a literary power which they rarely wielded, and a poetic imagination to which they seldom if ever rose, has built up around their phrases!

And if so, what are we to say? Dismiss it all as unscholarly and unreliable? Hardly. We may indeed, in the name of sound scholarship, refuse to call the whole content of these essays by the name of "Buddhism". We may say that they are a compound of certain ideas of ancient Pali Buddhism with certain ideas of modern origin. But what if the need of the West to-day be just such a compound? Then,

if it bring a fresh light into our lives, let us be grateful to the genius of Ananda Metteyya.

Whether it be adequate to the whole of our needs—that is another question. Finality, surely, is incredible. Are there not, moreover, deep-seated needs, yearnings unspeakable, which no system ever yet devised by man is adequate to meet? This is not the place for a discussion of them, but to commend to readers, both in East and West, the contents of this remarkable volume.

A Buddhist

CONTENTS

PAGE

Portrait of the Author—*Frontispiece*

Introductory v

The Religion of Burma 1

The Three Signata 112

Right Understanding 178

The Culture of Mind 235

The Miraculous Element in Buddhism . . . 282

The Rule of the Inner Kingdom 311

Devotion in Buddhism 341

Buddhist Self-Culture 385

Kamma 409

Appendix :

The Late Mr. Allan Bennett 433

Buddha-hood as an Office 437

THE RELIGION OF BURMA

I

The Origins of Buddhism

The national, and in former times the state-supported, religion of Burma is Buddhism of an exceptionally pure type. This religion, at the time of the census of 1901, was accepted by 9,184,121 persons, amounting to 88·6 per cent of the total population, inclusive of a large proportion of alien races, as well as the savage or semi-civilised tribes (Chins, Kachins, Karens, etc.) inhabiting the remoter parts of the country. Buddhism of the national type may, in fact, claim the adhesion of practically the whole of the two chief civilised races inhabiting the country—the true Burmese, constituting the bulk of the civilised population of Upper

Burma, and the Mon or Talaing race, for the most part resident in Lower Burma. It is further predominant in the Shan States, and has of late years made considerable progress amongst the semi-civilised Karens. Buddhism of the type prevalent in China (which differs widely from the local type, as will shortly appear) is followed by the large and important Chinese community, including both immigrants direct from China and the offspring of their marriages with Burmese wives.

The religion of Burma is commonly classified by occidental scholars as belonging to the "Southern" school of Buddhism. In fact, however, the terms "Northern" and "Southern," as applied to the different types of Buddhism, are misleading, historically—since all schools of Buddhist thought alike took their rise in India, and even in China and Japan have undergone later but minor modifications—and also as a matter of fact. For whilst, in

speaking of the so-called "Southern" school—predominant in Burma, Ceylon, and Siam—we have to deal with a single and definite body of doctrine and ethics, we find no such unanimity in the "Northern" Buddhist countries—China, Japan, Tibet, Corea, and a large area in northern and eastern Asia in general. There is, in fact, no one "Northern" Buddhism, but a great number of widely differing sects, bodies agreeing only in the absolute fundamentals of the Buddhist doctrine, and in claiming The Buddha as the Founder of their respective creeds.

Another classification which has been put forward by western scholars in the attempt to define the Buddhist schools now prevalent is that of the Vehicles, Northern Buddhism being defined as Mahāyāna or the Greater Vehicle, and Southern Buddhism as Hinayāna or the Lesser Vehicle. These terms are, indeed, of Buddhist (and, as might be deduced, of Northern) origin, but, whatever distinction may

have been originally involved in these terms, it certainly is not the same difference as that now prevalent between the Southern and the Northern schools, so far as we can tell by comparing the works of Ashvaghosha with those in Pāḷi and their commentaries; or judging from the accounts the Chinese pilgrims to India have bequeathed to us, concerning the doctrines and the distribution of followers of either sect.

The native, and the correct, designation of the pure form of Buddhism now prevalent in Burma, Ceylon, and Siam is *Theravāda*, "The Tradition of the Elders" or, as we might justly render it, the Traditional, Original, or Orthodox School. It unfortunately happened that European scholarship, during the last most remarkable century characterised by so general a widening of the mental horizon, came first into contact, not with the pure and simple Buddhism of the Theravāda School, but with the divers teachings and Scriptures of the various

Northern sectaries; and the earlier work of occidental scholars in the field of Buddhism was directed for the most part to the study and translation of the multitudinous Scriptures —in Saṃskṛṭ, Chinese, Tibetan, and so forth —of the various sections of the Northern Church. The effect was much the same as if a body of non-Christian scholars, setting out to investigate the nature and origins of Christianity, had first encountered, not the genuine sources of that religion, the Canonical Scriptures of the New Testament, but the later, garbled, and miracle-teeming writings of mediæval monks. Buddhism came thus to be first presented to the western mind as an oriental mysticism of the most extravagant type; its Founder no historical personage, but an imaginary divinity evolved from solar myths. So tenacious is the human mind to first impressions, that later, when the Pāḷi Scriptures of the Theravāda School, with

their commentaries, came to the knowledge of western scholars, there were many who still maintained the earlier and inaccurate views, supporting these, in face of the new additions to their knowledge of Buddhism, by the astounding supposition that the Pāḷi literature was the production of Buddhaghosha and other Buddhist divines who lived some thousand years after the date ascribed to the Founder of the Religion.

Happily, however, further evidence was brought to light by the discovery in India of the celebrated Inscriptions of Asoka—inscriptions written in a character that no Singhalese monk of the tenth century of the Buddhist era could have read, even had he been aware of their existence; the contents of these Edicts, written in a language practically the same as the Pāḷi used in the Scriptures of Theravāda Buddhism, demonstrated beyond all doubt the authenticity of the Pāḷi Canon and its

commentaries, and of the Singhalese Chronicles. Later archæological discoveries in India brought further startling confirmations, even as to the very names of Buddhist missionary monks who, the Chronicles and Commentaries stated, had gone forth from the third Great Council of the Religion, together with details as to the actual districts in which their missionary labors had been pursued. The great mass of evidence from these discoveries, and from other non-Buddhist sources, as well as the strong internal evidence of the unique Pāḷi literature itself, enable us now to assert that beyond all reasonable doubting in the Theravāda Buddhism now prevalent in Burma we have, practically unchanged after twenty-five centuries, the pure and original Religion propounded by The Buddha; and that in the Pāḷi Pitakas—the Canonical Scriptures of that Religion—we have the veritable Teaching of The Master, preserved in the language He

spoke, and for the most part couched in the actual words He employed in the course of His religious mission.

In order that the reader may understand the intense devotion of such a people as the Burmese—a people young in racial development, eager, active, impatient of all restraint—to this Buddhist religion, whose key-note is self-restraint and "Selflessness" in life; and that the significance to modern civilisation of the preservation amongst a Mongolian people of this greatest product of Āryan thought may be rendered clear, it is necessary that we should first consider the circumstances and the environment in which it arose. Wherever, in actual fact, the original home and cradle of the great Āryan race was situate, we can have but little doubt that, at some very remote period in its history, that race divided into two great streams of emigration, each probably consisting of many a successive tidal

wave. Of these two streams, one spread north and westwards, populating Europe; the other south and perhaps eastwards into Persia and the modern Afghanistan, ultimately penetrating the great barrier-wall of the Himālayas, and passing through the valleys of Kashmīr into India proper, taking up its final resting-place in the vast and fertile Gangetic plain. As it progressed in its conquest of India, everywhere displacing more or less completely the indigenous inhabitants by dint of its superior civilisation and its higher mental growth, the Indian branch of that race found itself in an environment very different from that of the north-and-westward-tending stream. Brought earlier to maturity under the warm Indian skies; finding, in that genial and productive climate, opportunities for leisure and reflection such as were denied in the severer conditions of life in the temperate zone, the Indian Āryans had reached, before the era of The Buddha, to

a state of intellectual progress such as even now their northward-wending kinsfolk of the European stream are but approaching. The climatic conditions of the Gangetic valley, indeed, tended to the promotion of such mental, rather than material, growth; and so it was that the Indian Āryans, though falling far short of the material prosperity of Greek and Roman civilisations, yet indefinitely transcended these in philosophy, in religion, in comprehension of those deeper lessons of life which can only be approached when civilisation has attained to a more or less complete emancipation from the primary necessities of life. Food, warmth, and clothing all came easier or were less needed in India than in Europe; whilst leisure which is the first essential of deep and earnest thinking was the privilege even of the poorest. Thus came about the high degree of mental progress mentioned; and whilst, even to the instructed western

reader, acquainted for the most part only with the smaller realm of Latin, Hellenic, and Hebraic culture, the statement may appear doubtful or impossible, in Pāḷi literature which we are considering we find ample demonstration that such high mental progress was a fact. In the Pāḷi Pitakas are lists, for instance, of the divers schools of thought and systems of philosophy which were extant in India in The Buddha's time; lists the most significant and interesting to the European reader, who may find amongst them the equivalent of every latest development of modern thought, the very replica of all our most "advanced" philosophies, from the crudest of materialisms to the most transcendental, purely idealistic views of life.

The chief difference between the civilisations of eastern and western Āryans, due to their differing environment, reached of necessity into every department of human polity;

the same typical divergence manifesting in every realm of life. For the western, of hard necessity, *material* progress, material science, material development, came first and foremost. It was only when the application of science came, during the past century, to add immensely to the material welfare of the West, that even the worldly sciences found manifold adherents and made speedy progress. Theretofore the man who gave his life to science was either a wizard, an anathema, or an idle dreamer in the popular estimation; the great man of the West was he who *owned the most*, who exercised the most authority over the goods and persons of his fellow-men. In Āryan India all was different; *spiritual* progress, spiritual science —these held the foremost place, even in popular estimation; the chief concern of life was with the things that lay beyond it; and the truly great man in the popular imagination was not he who held the most in this world,

but he who knew the most of the other world.

And if the clear and lucid Āryan mind—perhaps the greatest, and without a doubt the most active and most earnest mental instrument humanity has yet evolved upon our earth—if that keen engine of research has lately, in the western world, made strides so marvellous in the conquest of the material world, it had not done less in India in The Buddha's days in conquest of the wider realm of spiritual knowledge, the Kingdom of Truth, the Empire of the deeper things of life. Our western world has only within the last decade produced its first attempt to study and to classify those deeper realms of life to which the mind, in special states of exaltation, can gain access.[1] In India, not the

[1] The reference is to *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, by Prof. William James. The Author, however, was unfortunately admittedly unacquainted with the Buddhist aspect of his subject; and, consequently his work for the most part is concerned with Christian religious experience, and its classification, alone.

mere three earlier stages of spiritual experience dealt with in Professor James's work but *eight* such stages had been so thoroughly investigated, had so far become the common knowledge of all who studied these matters, that their nature is dismissed with a mere stereotyped collection of phrases most tantalising to the modern student, as premising a knowledge of their details which he does not possess. To these Eight Realms of Thought—each in succession transcending the last one, as the clear lucid realm of waking life transcends in vivid sequent consciousness the world of dreams—The Buddha added yet another: that "State beyond All Life," which now we call Nibbana.

The reason for the intense devotion of the Burmese to their religion, on the one hand, and on the other the significance and value of that religion in itself, will now be clear to the reader. That devotion and that significance and

value arise from the fact that in the religion of Burma, preserved albeit in the minds of a Mongolian race, till recently secluded by the natural barriers of sea and hill, we have the final and the greatest product of Āryan religious thought, the ultimate outcome of centuries of religious training and experience, the result achieved by generations immemorial of Āryan thinkers under circumstances as favorable for success in this direction as the conditions of western life have been favorable to the development of modern science. The parallel, indeed, between the two extends much further than mere similarity of conditions—extends to the very fundamental principles of the two great bodies of knowledge. In both, the whole grand edifice of thought rests upon the discovery of the Principle of Causation; in both, the natural concept of the immature mind—the thought arising from the earlier reign of Animism, that all phenomena are the outcome of the activity

of some living, if spiritual, being or beings—is set aside, and we enter the ordered kingdom of the Reign of Law; and we may truly say that what Newton did for modern science in his stupendous discovery of the Law of Gravitation, that, twenty-five centuries ago, The Buddha accomplished for the science of the deeper things of life—the science, rather, of Life itself—in His discovery and enunciation of the universal Law of Karma. A religion without a God, denying the animistic conception of a subtle and immortal spirit tenanting the body of man, which yet can give, not faith, but reasoned hope for future progress and ultimate supreme attainment; empty of prayer, yet giving to its followers the solace prayer so surely brings; void of all dogma, yet offering to the fullest extent the sense of surety which dogma brings to those who can accept it; a religion founded on observation and attainment, whose results are always open to any who may

duly carry out the requisite preliminaries; asking of its followers not Faith, but Understanding—such is the astonishing spectacle afforded the student by the religion of Burma, a spectacle not, perhaps, without keen significance for that other western stream of Āryan life, now, by dint of mental growth, come well-nigh to parting with all its earlier beliefs.

The religion of Burma thus appeals to its adherents in each of the great departments of human mental activity; in the domain of intellect by the clarity and reasoned logic of its doctrines; in the realm of emotional life by the heart-moving story of its Founder's search after Truth, His compassion for all that suffer, and His Attainment; and, not less even than these high influences, by the exalted altruism of its deeper teachings. If you were to ask of a Burman the reason for his passionate devotion to his religion, the reply that he

would give would be "because it is so beautiful and true"; and this reply gives us the key-note of the whole teaching of the Buddhist Sacred Books. For, in these, in the ancient language which The Master spoke and which has come to hold in Burma much the same position that Latin held in Europe in the Middle Ages, we find no word equivalent to our "Buddhism" at all. The native word is Dhamma (Skt. Dharma), meaning, in this connection, both "Truth" and "Law," and the common phrase used in Pāḷi to cover the entire body of the religion, may be translated "This Truth and Discipline," a phrase which at least more nearly approximates to the nature of the religion than does our modern "Buddhism". *Whatever* is true—the truth concerning the deeper things of life—that, for the "Buddhist," is part of his religion; and in fact, whilst indeed He gave a new and a special significance to many a technical term then

prevalent amongst His fellow-countrymen, The Buddha handed on, in His "Truth and Discipline," many a thought and many a detail of spiritual practice and attainment which had been won by Indian saints and sages long before the era of His work and life.

From the synopsis already given of the general character of Buddhism, the reader will well understand that in this religion there is nothing to correspond to the definite creeds and sacraments familiar to western minds. But there *is* a formula which—always understanding that in itself there lies no special saving power—has come to be regarded as marking the formal entry of a person into the numbers of the lay-disciples of The Buddha; the recitation of which thus, in a sense, may be regarded as the equivalent of the Christian baptism, or to the public enunciation of one of the various Christian creeds. This formula is known in Pāḷi as the Ti-sarana or Threefold

Refuge-formula; it runs: "Buddhaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi, Dhammaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi, Saṅghaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi"—"I go to the Buddha as my Refuge (or, as my Guide), I go to the Truth as my Refuge, I go to the Order as my Refuge"—the whole formulary being thrice recited. This recitation marks the beginning of every religious function in Burma, from the offering of a few flowers by a child at the local sanctuary to the public acceptation, at the hands of a Chapter of the Order of the higher degree of Ordination into the Monastic Brotherhood, on the part of an adult novice. Having now given, in these introductory pages, a general idea of the nature, significance, and origin of the religion, we may most conveniently classify its details under the three headings of the Members of that Ti-ratana, that Three-fold Precious Treasure, wherein the Buddhist seeks, as we have seen, his Refuge and his Guide in life—the Treasure of the Enlightened

One, the Exalted Lord, the *Buddha*; the Treasure of the Most Excellent Law, the Truth or *Dhamma*; the Treasure of the Holy Brotherhood, the Community of the *Saṅgha*. One might briefly sum up the Holy Three—The Teacher, The Teaching, and The Taught.

II

The Buddha

The word Buddha, from the Indo-Āryan root-word *Buddh*, to be awake, aware, and hence to know, signifies the Awakened, or the Illuminated, or Enlightened One; it is thus not a name, but a title, the designation of an office or state of attainment. Correctly speaking, it is to the office, rather than to the holder of it, that reference is made in the above-cited Formula of the Threefold

Refuge; but, in just the same way as a British subject, speaking at the present time, might use the term "The King," meaning George V, so the Buddhist, in common usage, speaks of "The Buddha" as meaning the particular Indian Sage who founded the present Buddhist Religion. Buddhist eschatology informs us that alike in this world as in others (for Buddhism teaches the existence of innumerable inhabited worlds besides our own), there arises, from time to time, a man who, by dint of long search after Truth, sought for the sake of the salvation of suffering beings, attains by his own effort to Supreme Enlightenment, to Sammāsambodhi or Very Buddhahood; and, having so attained, He announces to all mankind "The Way," by following which they likewise may attain to this same Goal of Perfected Wisdom and Compassion. Those who, following the "Truth and Discipline" set forth by a Very Buddha,

reach in this life to the same ultimate Goal of Perfected Being are termed, not Buddhas, but Arahans, meaning the Exalted or Honored Ones; whilst yet a third class, who win again by their own effort, protracted through many lives, to the Goal of Perfection, finding the Way for themselves, instead of following the Way taught by a Very Buddha—are termed Pacceka-Buddhas (Skt. Pratyeka-Buddha, meaning, enlightened by self-effort). These differ from a Very Buddha in this that not having sought the Truth for the sake of others, but only for their own deliverance, they lack the special "Iddhi of the Dhamma"—the Power of the Truth which enables a Very Buddha so to frame words as will best move the hearts of His fellow-beings and bring them also to seek out the "Way of Peace". Buddhism teaches, in a specially modified sense which we shall presently consider, the Doctrine of Transmigration—teaches, that is, that every living

being both has lived before this present birth, and will continue in existence hereafter; and, in accordance with its root-conception of Causation, it makes the state of each birth causally dependent on the acts of those which preceded it. The qualifications, therefore, for the subsequent attainment of the status of a Very Buddha are, first, an immense and all-dominating *compassion* for the suffering involved in life, and the desire to find some Truth so great that by its application beings may achieve eternal relief from the suffering of repeated transmigration; secondly, the practice, with this end in view, of certain *Ten High Virtues*[1] (Dasa Pāramitā, in Pāḷi) perfecting himself in these through the devotion and self-sacrifice of many following lives; thirdly, the self-destined Buddha, thus suffused

[1] The ten are: Dāna, Charity; Sīla, Morality; Nekkhamma, Renunciation; Paññā, Wisdom; Vīriya, Strenuousness; Khanti, Patience; Sacca, Truthfulness; Adhitthāna, Resolution; Metta, Loving-kindness; and Upekhā, Resignation, or aloofness from the world's desires.

with Pity past all measuring, aspiring to attainment of the Supreme Enlightenment for that suffering's relief, must solemnly devote himself to this stupendous task in the *presence of a Very Buddha*, and must thereafter practise the Ten High Virtues through manifold successive lives, until the necessary "Power of the Truth" is won.

One who possesses these qualifications and has so definitely decided that, instead of seeking out the Truth for himself, so reaching Nibbana and passing "Beyond" all life, he will continue suffering rebirth after rebirth, in order that he may become a Very Buddha, is termed a Bodhisatta, or Buddha-To-Be, from the era of his self-devotion to this task until his attainment of Very Buddhahood. He, who for this our own world is now known as The Buddha, thus perfected Himself in the Ten High Virtues for five hundred and fifty successive lives, in any one of which He might

—so high already was the nature and degree of His spiritual attainment in even the first of them—have won to Arahanship, have attained Nibbana and so secured His own immediate and everlasting Peace, had He not thus devoted Himself, at the expense of His own spiritual progress and attainment, to life after life of self-renunciation, of arduous practice of the High Perfections, so that He might in the end throw wide the Way of Peace to all.[1]

[1] All these details as to the previous existence of the Buddha, His renunciation, as Bodhisatta, of His own immediate spiritual welfare for the sake of others, and so forth, are, it may appear, of the nature of dogmas—of *ex-cathedra* statements of facts beyond the possibility of demonstration. This, however, is not the case; they are, primarily, facts ascertained by the insight of The Buddha, and placed on record by His disciples; accepted, indeed, "on faith," by His present followers, though it is a reasoned belief rather than mere blind faith—reasoned, that is, from the circumstance that wherever we *can* test the truth of a statement of The Buddha (as in the case of the two first of the Four Noble Truths) we find His statements absolutely true. But the point is, first, that belief in these details is not necessary to the Buddhist; a man might be truly a Buddhist in our sense without accepting them at all; and, secondly, the chief fact to which our attention is directed in connection with them is the *nature of the ideal they portray*. That ideal —Selflessness, renunciation of self-interest for others' sake—*is* Buddhism, and *is* essential.

Passing from these traditional details as to the previous lives of the Bodhisatta to the historical facts concerning His last existence, we find that He, who was presently to receive the adoration of more followers than any other of the great teachers of humanity, was born in Northern India in the earlier half of the sixth century before Christ, as son of Suddhodana, the King or Chief of an aristocratic and proud Āryan clan known as the Sākyas, "the Capable Ones". The limitations of the present essay as to space, and the wide extent of the ground that must yet be covered if we are to give even a mere outline of what the religion of Burma teaches and implies, make it impossible that we should give more than the barest outline of the story of this Life which has changed the history of Asia, and may yet change the destinies of all the world. Those who seek further acquaintance with that story—and much indeed of the wonderful hold of Buddhism on its

followers' minds is due directly to its inspiring and heart-moving circumstances, so that clear insight into the Burmese character can scarce be had without this knowledge—may find it in *The Light of Asia* by Sir Edwin Arnold; in *The Soul of a People* by Fielding Hall; Bigandet's *Life and Teaching of Gaudama the Buddha*; and in several other current works. Here we confine ourselves to the briefest possible outline.

Born the son of King Suddhodana and Queen Māyādevī, the birth-name of Siddhattha, "The All-Prospering," was given to the illustrious subject of this sketch. Marked out from His very nativity as of world-changing destiny—for the Brāhmanas of His father's court had announced that either He would become a *Cakkavattin*, a world-ruling Emperor, or else, renouncing earthly conquest, home and kingdom, He would attain to the Supreme Enlightenment, to Universal Empire in the far more glorious Kingdom of Truth—the young

Prince, commonly known in after-life by His clan-name of Gotama, was from His cradle surrounded with all the pomp and luxury and circumstance that an oriental court of those days could bestow. The worldly heart of His royal father, moved by that selfsame spirit of contempt for the realities of life which makes a changing of their native religion, at dictate of "high interests of State," possible even for modern royalties, desired for his Son no spiritual empire, but only the worldly kingship won at the cost of the suffering of thousands; and dreamed of the Prince as adding kingdom unto kingdom, till all the earth should own His sway. Remembering the prophecy of the greatest among the sages who had prophesied the Prince's future glory, that of the two paths of life but one—the path of spiritual achievement—lay *truly* open for the Prince to tread; remembering, also, how that sage had told him further that his Son would be inspired

to leave the world when He should learn how sickness, suffering, and death were common heritage of all that live, the King ordained that the young Prince should be brought up in a palace from which all sight and mention of these evils should be banished; thinking thus to hide from Him all motive to compassion, until He should have entered past all doubting into the course of earthly conquest and of human rule. So, shielded from all knowledge of the wide world's suffering, surrounded by young and lovely playfellows, all eager to secure that never a careless word should whisper, in His heart, of misery without those guarded palace-walls; girt by a never-ending stream of pleasure and instruction in the sports and duties of His royal caste, the little Prince grew up from youth to manhood, nor ever dreamed of pain, sickness, and sorrow, of old age or drear decay or death. Yet even so begirt by all that fair conspiracy of silence and of

worldly love, those round Him noted signs that filled the King's too worldly heart with fear. Often, he learned, the Prince would fall, despite all effort of His young companions, into deep reverie and silent hours of thought. So when, grown presently to manhood's age, he loved and wedded the daughter of a neighboring monarch, the Princess Yasodharā, Suddhodana rejoiced, thinking that here, in earthly love, a fetter stronger than all his palace-guards could forge was found. Wedded at nineteen, for ten long years no offspring came to Him, and the King greatly grieved thereat, lacking this second chain of worldly love wherewith to bind his Son.

But vain at last were all the King's precautions, as vain at last are all the plans and schemes of worldly policy and compromise, seeing that all things change, that Death is Lord and guerdon of all life. What the present might not tell Him, all His selfless past lay

ready to reveal; and the story tells us, with all the pomp and circumstance of oriental imagery, how Truth at last came homeward to the Prince's heart. Even there amidst that guarded palace-garden, in the sunlight scented with the fairest flowers of life, the Love that would not be denied, the Truth that would not be concealed, practised and sought through all those previous lives of self-renunciation for the world, told Him how all that lives is subject to Sorrow: to Despair, to Sickness, to Old Age and Death. For Him the Veil that hides from us the memory of the bygone life and garnered wisdom was for a moment lifted; for Him a Vision, seen by no other eyes, appeared; a Voice that none else might hear spoke from the immemorial past; and, even as He rode in His chariot with His chief comrade, Truth—the bitter truth about the world—came home.

Men of those days in India had realised how no one could follow in the path of worldly

compromise, and at the same time win the inner hidden Kingdom of Spiritual Truth and Life. So it had become the custom, when a man had heard the call of the religious life, that he should leave *all*—home and friends and every circumstance of worldly welfare—and, clad in the orange robe of the religious, wander about the earth, even as he was wandering through the deeper reaches of the mind's wide kingdom, begging his daily food from the charity of the poorest of his fellow-men. Sickness, Old Age, and Death, each in His vision appeared, personified before the Prince's wondering, pitying gaze; and last of all there stood before Him the simulacrum of one of these ascetic Wanderers; whereat the bygone sleeping memory stirred within His heart, and He saw and understood what it behoved Him then to do. Could Truth live in a palace, or the anodyne for all this mass of Suffering be found amidst that

acme of the worldly life He then was living? Nay, surely; and then and there the Prince resolved that even that night He would go forth, a homeless Wanderer, to seek the Way of Liberation for the healing of the sorrow of the world.

And then, just when the King's last hope had really crumbled into dust, then, as He returned, silent and thoughtful from that last chariot-drive, they brought Him the news Suddhodana so long had looked for, news that there was born to Him a child, a son. Hanging upon His words, the attendants, little comprehending, heard him murmur: "*This is, indeed, another Fetter I must break*"—and so, thereafter, they named His son as Rāhula, *The Fetter*; and later, when he had become one of his exalted Father's followers, he bore that name, even in the Brotherhood itself.

That night, when all lay sleeping, the Prince, summoning His faithful charioteer, rode forth

from home and kingdom, from wife and child, from luxury and love; and, at the boundary of His father's little kingdom, cast aside His royal dress and went away, clad in the Wanderer's Yellow Robe, never again to see the faces He had loved until Supreme Enlightenment had widened for His heart the boundaries of Love's Empire, till they included the infinitude of every being that has life. He, bred upon the lap of luxury, henceforth was to live on such poor food as charity might offer; brought up in a palace, henceforth the earth must be His couch; no longer Prince, He dwelt among earth's humblest, but earth's holiest; for He had done what was *truly* great, He had set aside the path of compromise with worldly wisdom and the estimation of His royal kinsfolk; had cast aside that shadow of possession which worldly men deem real, for the Heart's Light within, the true kingdom of spiritual possession.

And yet, so far, it was but for a dream, a hope, that He had made this Great Renunciation.[1] In His heart there lay no store of inner knowledge such as might seem to offer recompense for all He cast aside; it was but a hope that shone before Him, and not unseldom, we may be sure, a hope that seemed well-nigh despairing. Surely somewhere, somehow, a sovereign remedy for all life's pain must hide!

For six long years He sought it—that hope so near us all, and yet so hard to find. Men then believed that Wisdom might be won only by starving, torturing the body; they thought, like the ascetics of all climes and ages, that Insight might be gained only by treating as an enemy, the body of this life. As has been said,

[1] It is to this event of "The Going-forth from Home"—His *Pabbajja*—that the Buddhist world in general gives the title of "The Great Renunciation". But more truly, perhaps, may that term be applied to some still greater episode of the *interior*, the *spiritual* life of the Exalted Lord, perhaps to His decision, after the Supreme Attainment, to declare the Liberating Truth for the Healing of All Life instead of entering the Peace at once, or, perhaps, to some event even beyond our possibilities of thinking.

the religious of India in that time won to depths of spiritual attainment far beyond aught that the West-Āryan yet has learned; they knew the way, by intense inward contemplation, to wake up from this our waking state as a man wakes out of dreams; to enter realm after realm of spiritual attainment, depth after depth of being's mystery, so that whilst the earthly body lay entranced, the mind wandered free through heights and depths of ecstasy, of being so intense that our thought can never compass it, just as in dreams we cannot grasp the clearer vivid consciousness of waking life. What the wise then knew, quickly the erstwhile Prince now gathered, passing from sage to sage, learning their methods, and practising alike their modes of inward ecstasy and their austerities, until at last there lived no sage, no Holy One amongst them all, who had won further into Being's depths than He; or any Wanderer so famed, even there in India, where

asceticism long had reached to the very ultimate of human endurance, for the awful rigor of His penances, the strictness of His vigils and His fasts.

To the very heights of Being He attained—to that supreme, that ultimate of conscious Being, known in India as the Brahman or the Paramātman; the uttermost of Selfhood, the Light of Life whereto all this Universe is as it were but a shadow; this living, breathing, manifold existence but the wavering darkness of Its multiscient Light. To that Supremest Cosmic Consciousness He won, and yet turned back to earth in what approached despair. As indeed all others who thus had reached that Higher Self of all the Universe, had also seen, in the light of the wide-reaching understanding that that attainment of itself involves, so He saw that even here was no *Finality*, no Endless Peace such as He had sought for the Liberation of All Life. There too, howsoever

exalted, howsoever subtle and supreme that Ultimate of Life might be—there too reigned Selfhood; and there, thence, Desire; even as one of India's ancient sages sang: "*In the beginning Desire arose in That, which was the Germ, the Origin of Mind.*" Subtle and high as It might be, It still lay under the fell bondage of Desire; and, as the Ṛṣhis taught, that Brahman, desiring, had emanated all this Universe in Its creative thought, and when at last, after the "Age of Brahmā" all living things had once again, through paths of suffering life innumerable, won back to that Supreme of Being, even then, after the vast period of rest in the "Night of Brahmā," once more the undestroyed Desire must spring; once more a new, another torture-teeming Universe come forth—and so on to eternity.

But it was just from this same awful Cycle of Unending Life inalienably involved in Pain,

that He, now grown so wise, sought refuge and a Way of Liberation—a *final* Peace, a Goal secure, not destined to be lost again, was the one remedy for all this pain-filled self-repeating life. Finding that in these spiritual attainments of the Ṛṣhis, and in the dread austerities they practised, lay not that sure Peace He hoped to win, He turned away alike from system and from practices; and then it was that the little body of disciples, five in number, who had so far followed Him—hoping to win guerdon of their service when He should gain the Ultimate Enlightenment—deserted Him in that hour of disappointment and despair. He, who had so starved His body as never another saint in India, once more took food sufficient for proper nourishment of His frame; and so these five, daring, as ever the little-minded dare, to judge their Master's conduct, left Him, thinking that now He never would attain.

But ever the darkest hour precedes the dawn, and so it was with the Bodhisatta. We may well see how, at that self-righteous judgment and desertion, His thoughts must have well-nigh a moment wavered, must have turned back to all that real-seeming life that He had cast away—for *this*. When His disciples left Him in petty scorn, because He not only perceived that the ascetic practice of six long torturing years was all an error, a mistake—that no Way of Liberation ever could open up that way—but also had the moral courage then and there to leave a practice He had seen was useless; weakened by long fast and vigil, wearied as even the greatest must weary of the littleness of life, the futility of all our utmost striving; then, we may well conceive how even that compassionate Heart must once again have turned to the thought of all the worldly welfare He had left behind. Father and wife and child, old faces and beloved

companions of His youth; the throne that waited still and prayed for Him; the visible reality of kingship He had left behind; how these things must all have called to Him now, deserted, discredited, abandoned, because even in defeat He would not for a moment follow on a path that once He saw could not lead to the Goal He sought! Not for Himself, but for helping mankind, the suffering, pain-filled world, had He abandoned all these things: and yet, at fancied rumor of a temporary defeat, those who to Him represented the world for which He had so arduously striven, left Him discredited, alone! The Books relate, once more in oriental trope and imagery, how this last terrible temptation came to Him; how Māra the Tempter of men's hearts, the Spirit of Worldiness that lives in each of us, marshalled his hosts for conflict—the last great battle for the mastery between the good and evil of that incomparable mind. There in the

solitary jungle came the conflict, as, seated beneath the Tree thereafter sacred to His memory, He passed in review the painful struggle of those six arduous years. Had he not tried it *all*, proved every path by personal effort, won to the very highest State of Being of which the ancient saints had sung? He was profoundly acquainted with states of being so high and wonderful that men might spend whole lives in seeking them, and yet could not attain; the ancient saints said this was all; that beyond That Brahman was no further progress—It, the Ultimate of Life—and yet, even in That was still a bondage, even that Heart of Being still was subject to the Law of Change, subject, since Desire still reigned in It. Desire! From height to depth of life Desire was King; and the root of this Desire lay hidden and protected in the very citadel of Self, of Life! If from that all-dominant Desire, even in the Ultimate

of Life, the Self Supreme—a Selfhood widened till its boundaries embraced even the whole of life—was no escape, how should there be ever a deliverance out of suffering; seeing that Sorrow's Cause lies in Desire, in Self-desire alone? What use, indeed, to give up all the goods of life, to cast aside the world in search of Liberation for All Life, if so one but exchanged the lower bondage for the higher; the gross desires of worldly life, the petty kingdom of the lower selfhood, for that all-immanent and all-including Selfhood of the Brahman—if so one but exchanged the suffering of years for that of æons; if even Brahman still was Selfhood, subject still to that grim Law whereby pain follows every thought for self?

So, to the Bodhisatta seated solitary beneath the Tree, now termed the Bodhi-tree or Tree of Wisdom, came home the Great Temptation, the conflict with Māra the Wicked

and his host, the powers of evil dramatised to vivid Selfhood in His mind: the final struggle in that great mind-empire for the mastery betwixt the powers of evil and of good. In the end (as always in the end) the nobler triumphed; the evil perished never to rise within that Heart again. Even as He seated Himself beneath the Tree of Wisdom, the Bodhisatta made the Great Resolve: "*Never will I arise from this place, though this My frame shall perish of starvation—not though the blood within these veins shall cease to flow, till I have won Enlightenment Supreme.*" When at last the final dire temptation—the image of the weeping wife calling Him back to glory and to love—was vanquished and had fled, then, before that searching mental Vision sprang open the sealed doorways of a new, another Pathway, a Path, the very name of which had died out of the memory of earth's holiest; the Path which

leads to Liberation from *all* thraldom; the Way of Selflessness which reaches to Life's Further Shore. Through the long sequent line of many a bygone and forgotten life He looked back to that time wherein, meeting Dīpaṅkara, the Very Buddha of an age well-nigh unthinkably remote, He, then named Sumedha, an ascetic Wanderer already come near to the fulfilment of all holiness, had turned back from the Path that Dīpaṅkara, the Blessed One, had opened to His followers; and then, before that holy Exalted One, had taken the Great Resolve Himself to become a Very Buddha for the salvation of the worlds. Through it all He now, in the light of the new great Dawn that was upon Him, traced the clear causal line of this high Path of Peace. Not through the well-known Way of Indian saints and sages, mounting from height to height of being, yet ever bound by chains of subtler-growing Selfhood, stretched this

high Path, so new and yet so old; not through the successive planes of consciousness; but through the Way of Selflessness that Path extended, outcome of acts innumerable of self-renunciation, its motive power Compassion —pity for suffering life grown great and strong, till it embraced all things that live. As one whose mind had opened to perception of a fourth spatial dimension might understand, the way to it lay equally from high or low, from up or down, in three-dimensional space, so now He saw how this new Path led equally from highest as from lowest realms of conscious life. Wherever in the All of conscious life there reigns no thought of self, *there* lies that Path of Peace; so hard to win, and yet so nigh to all. Looking deeper yet in that profoundest meditation, He saw behind the causal sequences of all those lives the power that moved them all—the twelve-linked Cycle of Causation—Nescience, Ignorance,

Not-Understanding, giving birth through an inevitable sequence to conscious Life, to Change, to Death, and so to Life once more; and here again His growing Insight showed Him how Self the Enemy lay at the root of all this cycle of self-repeating change; how, when the thought and hope of self died, with it, too, died the power of Life's Law, the power which brings about birth and death.

And so, finishing the Path, He came to where its end is, in a State beyond All Life, wherein the triple fires of Nescience—Craving, and Hatred, and the Delusion of the Self—no more can burn; to That which is the Goal and Hope of Life, the State of Peace that reigns where self is dead. Fruition of all life, and yet Beyond and Other than all life, it grows but from the ashes of the self outburnt; as from the seed's decay and utter dissolution, from the mire and darkness of the earth, springs forth the flower to sunlight and the

wide-extending air. Freed from all mental bondages, Conqueror of Self, Master of the Hidden Mysteries of Pain and Birth and Death: a Very Buddha, Utterly Enlightened, with the great Knowledge in His Heart whereby whoso should follow it should likewise win Nibbana's Peace: so He attained His Aim, His Hope, His Goal: so won the Healing Truth that salves the fever of this life enselfed: saw, yet beyond all life, a new, another, and a final Light.

So, with the dawning sun that saw the end of that great night's Temptation and Attainment; so, with the vaster, ultra-cosmic dawn of Utter Wisdom in His Heart, once more the Way of Peace stood open to the world. Millions unnumbered since that day have followed in the Way He showed; and even now, when half five thousand years have well-nigh sped, millions still seek it, still turn to it as Hope, and Light of Life, and Goal. Over this land of

Burma, where these words are written, it still reigns supreme; its message written over all the land in shrine and monastery and temple; written still deeper in the hearts and lives of women and of men. Forty long years after that supreme Illumination, The Master lived and taught His growing band of followers; passing at last Himself from life for ever, into the Silence, the Utter Peace whereunto He had shown the Way.

All that long ministry of Love and Wisdom we must needs pass over; and if it shall appear that too much space has even now been given to these earlier, striving, searching years rather than to the longer period when their fruits were garnering, the answer is that in these earlier years the secret of The Master's power over Burmese hearts lies hid. Become a Very Buddha, won to Full Enlightenment, freed from the Chains of Selfhood, Master and Teacher of the Gods and men, His personality

submerged in His all-dominating Office, men's hearts refuse to think of Him—so Holy and so High. But when, like all of us, He knew not; when, for pity of the pain of all that lives, He gave up all that men hold dear to follow what the worldly deem a shadow; when He made mistakes, as in those six long years of vain self-torture, and learning their vanity, was forsaken by His disciples in that He could no longer follow what He saw to be untrue: then, there, the hearts of men can echo in response to Him, then the thought of Him can thrill our lives to greater nobleness; stirring our life's depths until we long—yet ah! how vainly long—to grow a little nearer to His likeness, to live a little nearer to the life He lived!

Only one thing more can here be told of that great life: a fact which cannot be omitted here, for without its deep significance the whole incomparable history of Buddhism could

not be understood. It is the fact that, when He passed away, His near disciples, looking back on all those years of constant teaching and example, could say of Him: "*So passed away the Great, the Loving Teacher, who never spake an angry or a cruel word.*" Only that, and yet what blessing for humanity has not been hidden in that brief pregnant summary of a life—greater than any life amongst the myriads of the sons of men! A Teacher of Religion, the Founder of a great religion, who lived amongst His fellows, these holding views and following creeds the most divers; who lived and taught for forty years the new Truth He had found, the Truth wherewith He burned to help His fellow-men; and yet, who never spoke an angry or a cruel word! Think, you that read, what potency of truth lies hidden in that little sentence. Forty years' ministry of teaching, and never an angry word—no word of blame

or harsh denunciation of the worldly of His time; no threatenings of hell for those who would not follow in the way He taught! It is because His followers could truly say that of His life, that, in such contrast to all other of the world's great faiths, Buddhists this day can boast that on their Creed's behalf has never one drop of blood been shed, never a persecution waged, never a "Holy War" been prosecuted; although to-day five hundred million human beings have taken refuge in His Name, His Truth. To the Buddhist, that fact, did it stand alone, were proof beyond traversing of His religion's truth. For men who *know*, no longer fight or angrily denounce each other; where Wisdom is, there is perfect tolerance. The things for which men war are false by that same proof that where hatred and denunciation reign, there Truth is not. Think of the bitter wordy warfare of the logomachic pseudo-science of the Middle Ages in Europe, of the

interminable controversies which raged between the different bodies of scholastics then; contrast this with the relative peace of modern science—at least where fundamental matters are concerned—and at once this attitude is obvious. Over acknowledged *facts*—such as the Law of Gravitation nowadays appears—no vainest or most foolish man ever has lifted hand in wrath against his fellows; it is the *fancies* that men fight for; in defence of vain and false imaginations that they hate, oppose, and fight.

After even this brief account of that first of the "Three Jewels" or Refuges, The Buddha, the nature of the Second Member of the Buddhist Triad will in part already seem clear. In His last message to the world, The Master said to His disciples: "*Do not think, after I am gone—'Our Teacher is no longer with us.' The Truth that I have taught you, that shall be your Teacher*"; and so it has been to this day. The Master's life and The

Master's Teaching, these are but parts reciprocal of one great Truth; that life was the Truth in terms of human action; that Truth is but the Way whereby we seek to follow Him. Therefore it is that in this article so much space has been given to the story of The Buddha; with that His Teaching at once grows clear and luminous; without it much must needs be little understood.

III

The Dhamma

The Dhamma (Skt. Dharma), the second of the Three Great Refuges, is then the Teaching which The Master left us in His stead. Derived from a root-word meaning "to manifestly exist," "to palpably appear," we may transcribe it as *The Truth*, as has been done in these pages; or as *The Law*, the causal

sequence of the deeper things of life. As a Law carries out a series of phenomena, or as clear Truth alone can carry us over the trackless waters of life's ocean to the Goal Unseen beyond, so also has the root *Dhar* the secondary meaning of "that which bears, or carries, or conveys".

All Buddhist Truth was summed up by a great disciple of The Master in a single stanza: *To abstain from all evil; To fulfil all Good; And to purify the Heart—This is the Teaching of the Buddhas.* The first term, *To abstain from all evil*, sums up the whole body of Buddhist practical ethics on its *negative* side; it is summarised in the word *Sīla*, meaning Harmony or Virtue; and it includes all the ordinances of The Master as to those things His followers should avoid. In practice it becomes the *Five Great Precepts*—five commandments binding on every Buddhist, which commonly are recited in the ancient

language of the Sacred Texts, the Māgadhi, after the Refuge-formula detailed above. The Five are: Not to take life; Not to take property; Not to commit impurity; Not to lie or slander or use harsh speech; and Not to use intoxicating liquors. These Five Precepts are absolutely binding on every humblest follower of The Master; they constitute the essential minimum of Buddhist ethics, and he who constantly violates any one of them is no Buddhist, however loud his proclamation of his faith may be. Buddhism is Understanding Truth, and hence—since what we *really* understand, we *do* (as we understand "fire burns," and so abstain from touching burning coals)—it is *to act accordingly*. It is understood that men are human, fallible—that a man may break any or even all of these Five Precepts now and then; but if, considering (as the Buddhist is taught constantly to do) his conduct, he finds he has so erred, he still can

set things right by *actual* repentance, by using his every effort to abstain from a like mistake in future.

To this irreducible minimum of the Five Precepts, the pious Buddhist layman frequently of his own accord sets himself to observe three more: Not to take food after noon (as such is held to conduce to sloth and to impurity); Not to use high or broad seats or couches (which in the East, where the floor is the common sitting-place, betokens pride and luxury); Not to use personal adornments, scents, and unguents, and to abstain from witnessing dancing, shows, and plays. These Eight Precepts—regarded, as to the three last of them, as binding only for the day on which they are assumed—are commonly taken on the Buddhist "Sabbath," a movable fast-day or feast-day, dependent on the changes of the moon, and so following roughly at intervals of a week.

On these *Uposatha* days, especially during the period of the "Buddhist Lent" (three months, roughly July, August, September, the time of the rains in the birthplace of Buddhism, the Gangetic valley), men, women, and children, and especially the elders, leave off work, and repair to the neighborhood of the local Monastery, where there is nearly always a separate rest-house for their accommodation. Here, during the morning, the women prepare the day's one meal for Monks and Novices, as well as for themselves and families, wait on the Monks before meal-time, and "take the Refuges and the Precepts," Five or Eight according to their wish. In general it is the elders of both sexes who elect to take the extra three Precepts, whilst the younger generation take but the usual Five, and so can have their ordinary evening meal. After the chief meal of the day—which for Monks and Novices and those among the laity

who have taken the Eight Precepts must be finished before midday—all generally repair to the Monastery itself, and listen to an exposition of the Dhamma by some senior Member of the Order; thereafter returning to the rest-house, they spend the remainder of the day in meditation and the practice of their various devotions. Not uncommonly—since the psychology of Buddhism is a favorite study in Burma, even with the laity—they pass a part of the time in discussion of the preaching they have heard, or of some special point in the profound *Abhidhamma*, the portion of the Scriptures devoted to the consideration of the processes of Thought and of Life; or, as we might translate the term, the Psychology of Buddhism.

Of the further extensions of *Sīla*, Virtue, this first caption of the Law—the ten Precepts of the Novice and the 227 Rules which regulate the conduct of the Monk—further mention will

be made in the discussion of the Third Great Treasure, the Sangha-Ratana, or Treasure of the Brotherhood. Here we need only call attention to the underlying *principle* of all these various commandments: they all involve the beginnings of *self-restraint*; they are all imposed and have their rationale in that the commission of the actions forbidden involves the infliction of pain, of loss and suffering of some sort on others. Thus, from the very beginnings of his teaching, from the very commencement of his life, the Buddhist-born is trained up to self-restraint, to the giving up of acts that would inflict loss or suffering on other lives. Thus early in the Law appears that Doctrine of Selflessness in practice, which, as we shall later see, crowns the whole edifice of Buddhist Teaching.

The second term of our threefold Dhamma-text, *To fulfil all Good*, sums up the next great chapter of Buddhist practice. This is termed *Dāna*, Charity in every sense of the word, and

it includes the whole of what we may term the *active* side of morality, just as Sīla covers and includes the negative aspects. It is as though the religion begins with the very lowest type of man—that base and ignorant type which is accessible to fear alone—by telling him: "This life is not all; nothing that is, but must in some form be again; out of this present life you must surely die, and just as surely take rebirth. See how unevenly are apportioned the lots of living things; some bound into low and loathsome forms of insects and of animals; and, even amongst mankind, some great and prosperous and noble, others poor and wretched and debased. None can escape from death, and death is but the portal of another life. Just as the thistle-seed gives rise to thistles only and the good rice to rice alone, so is it with the lives of men and animals, for through all life Causation reigns supreme. If then, you would avoid these low, base, wretched, and ignoble

lives—or others yet the sages wot of, lives filled with horror and remorse and pain for evil deeds wrought in the past—then you must practise *Sīla*, Virtue, true morality; that is the one method of escape from all that threatening mass of pain."

But to the man who—albeit from the basest of all motives, fear—practises even the mere Five Precepts, there comes an inward growth which makes of him a nobler, hence happier man. For all that, Sīla is really *self-renunciation*; and when, growing thus wiser, the humblest follower of The Master comes to the second stage of growth, then the Law speaks a new, a greater message: the message of *Dāna*, Charity and Love. "It is not enough," it says, "only to secure your freedom from the lower, pain-filled lives; there is a greater hope than this. If, in addition to mere abstention from the evil, you will fulfil and practise *Good*; if you will feed the holy poor—those who are

sick and weak and old; if you will give of your substance to the world about you, taking thought for others' sorrows, helping to relieve what suffering can be relieved by generous gift of wealth and food and care; then again will the Great Law act in its inevitable sequences. By *avoiding evil*, you escape from base and evil lives; by *practising Charity* you further ensure to yourself lives full of happiness and joy; lives full of earthly bliss, or, higher yet than you can think of, lives of the bright, the Heaven-dwelling-Ones—the denizens of holier, happier spheres than this our world." And so that man, still for no high, exalted motive, but yet for one not all so base as fear—so that man, out of *self-interest*, thinking: "Thus will I, giving now a little of my wealth, secure unbounded riches in the lives to come," sets out in practice of this second task; he gives of his goods, his wealth, his help, his care to those less fortunate in life than he; he relieves the

destitute, is father to the fatherless, gives shelter to the homeless and unhappy; using his worldly wealth no more for self's sole sake, but for the aiding of the weak and poor.

And here again the Law of Life acts and reacts upon the heart of him who gives—for such is the essence of Love, which, like a magnet, grows but the stronger the more it is employed in imparting its magnetism to other bars of steel. Starting to give for love of self, of self alone, the very contact with the lives and needs of others widen the erstwhile petty limits of man's self-hood. Giving to the poor, the weak, the desolate; giving to the holy—those who have renounced all that the world holds dear for the sake of Truth and love of all—giving to these, the confines of his own heart's life grow wider to include their hopes, their sorrows; so that the kingdom of his mind, the inner purpose of his being, extends, enlarges, and grows nobler each succeeding

day. This is the second, deeper Truth the Dhamma has to teach us; how, like a flame of fire, Love kindles Love, grows by mere act of loving; and nowhere in the world is that great Truth more understood—and so more followed—than in this Golden Chersonese. Never was there a people more generous, more full of charity than this; it has been the wonder of every author who has truly gained an insight into the hearts and lives of this most fascinating race. All the land is covered with tokens of their charity, from the golden glory of the vast fabric of the Shwé Dagôn Pagoda at Rangoon—gilded all over at intervals of a few years, at a cost of lakhs of rupees, by voluntary offerings of the people—to the village well, or Monastery, or rest-house for chance travellers; down to the little stand containing a few vessels of clear cool water, which even the poorest can set up by the roadside and keep daily plenished for the benefit of thirsty passers-by.

In a land where Charity holds so high a place, not in the talk, but in the conduct of its daughters and its sons, such poverty as India and all western countries experience, is utterly unknown. True, in a sense, the vast majority of the peasantry are poor—poor, that is, as judged by the European standard of living, with its manifold and unceasing "wants". But of the poverty that is cruel, harsh, base, and sordid; the poverty of an Indian village or a London slum, there is naught at all. The poverty that shames and curses western nations, that breeds crime and cruelty, that starves even little children to death, such is unknown in Burma; and it will remain unknown for just so long as they shall hold fast to their Love-teaching religion. There is always food to be obtained, if not in the layman's house, then in the Monastery; and the doors of the Monastery travellers' rest-house stand ever open to the poorest wanderer, be he a layman

or a Monk. True it is that in much of the ceaseless tide of Burmese charity is somewhat of wastefulness; pagoda added to pagoda, shrine built by the very side of shrine, great meals prepared, too great by far for their recipients, the Monks and Monastery-boys and wandering lay-devotees, to eat, so that when all have fed, the very dogs can scarce finish the remains; but the Burman would justly answer criticism on this point by saying that one cannot have too much of what is truly good; and he does not merely *talk* of charity, he *lives* it in the smallest detail of his daily life. With growing national wisdom—for the Burmese as yet are but a youthful race, filled with youth's joy in life, having the failings as well as the virtues and enthusiasm of youth—with greater experience, with their quick assimilation of the new conditions of life and the resultant wider understanding, the Burmese will grow, not less, but more wisely charitable.

As it is, this second Teaching of their Law, their Truth, is so lived up to by them as to have become the common marvel of all who have seen it, all who have realised what it means.

Thirdly, and lastly, in our Text we read: *To purify the Mind*; and here we enter into that domain which differentiates Buddhism from all other religions; the realm of its Teaching as to the nature, content, and the Goal of Life; the viewpoint of its entire structure. Here it is that we pass forthwith into a region so far alien, so strange to occidental views of life, that most of the modern writers on the subject—the bulk of them, unhappily, men who believed themselves opponents of Buddhism (which is tantamount to saying that they had not achieved its meaning)—have gone utterly astray. All other world-religions, even the wonderful philosophies, Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, and others, elaborated by the Indian sages, have, following

the obvious in life, centred their Universe in the concept of the Self—just as, in the old Ptolemaic astronomy, moon, sun, and planet, and the firmament of stars beyond, all centred in and circled round the stable wide expanse of the earth. The lesser self of man, the immortal soul that tenanted this body of flesh, that after life must leave it, "as a man sets aside his worn-out clothes"; that, and the greater Self, the Soul Supreme of the Godhead—whether the thought of it were limited and personal like that of the ancient Hebrews, or subtle and well-nigh impersonal like the highest transcendental concept of the Indian saints—those are the two ideas: ideas in fact interdependent and complementary, wherein all other creeds have centred their hope, their universe, and their goal.

And both, in this Buddhist Truth, are not merely absent, but actually denied. Just as to the men of the Middle Ages to whom

Copernicus first propounded the doctrine that the earth in fact was not the centre of the Universe, that there is in truth *no* centre, but only a constant, ordered flux of change, soon to be reduced to definite law by Newton's great discovery: just as to those who, in geocentric times, first heard this new doctrine of the non-centred Universe, the very thought of it seemed monstrous and absurd, against the constant evidence of sense (for did they not daily *see* the rise of sun and moon and stars, and their wide circling round the earth?)—so, to those nurtured on the self-centred creeds and world-views outside Buddhism, appears at first the non-self-centred doctrine of The Buddha's Law.

Let not the student here imagine we are concerned merely with a dogma, with a view of life important but in men's imagination or belief. In the Anatta Doctrine, or, as it might be rendered, the Teaching of Selflessness, we have the statement of a fact so profound, so

true, that every action of the man who holds it must needs be modified from what he otherwise would have done. On it depends the whole of Buddhist Teaching, the threefold practice of its ethics, Morality, Charity, and *Samădhi*, or Right Culture of the Mind; to it, once more, is due that perfect Buddhist tolerance and freedom from all persecuting or denouncing spirit. Not least significant of all, it is the conception towards which the philosophy of modern science is steadily bearing the West Āryans; established already in the domain of physics, it now is finding ever wider and deeper acceptance amongst the foremost thinkers of the modern world.

Briefly stated, this fundamental principle on which The Buddha's Truth depends is to the effect that there exists, in the light of the Highest Wisdom, no Self, and hence no not-Self (in the old metaphysical, antinomian sense of the term) at all. "*Whether high or low, great*

or small, gross or subtle, mean or exalted," to quote an oft-repeated passage of the Pāḷi canon, "*there is no Self at all,*" and this astounding proposition is the chief concept of the final, Third Stage of the Buddhist practice: *Samādhi* or Mental Concentration so directed as to lead to *Paññā*, the Higher Wisdom or Insight. Put in other words, the meaning of this Doctrine of Anatta is, that *Life* in deepest truth *is One*—that the conception of the "I" and the "not-I," or "the Universe," as contrasted or separated entities is founded on a misapprehension far greater and much farther reaching than was the old delusion of the geocentric astronomy. *All Life is One.* There is neither in the heart of man nor in the heart of heaven any one separate and immortal being—an existence other and apart from aught in all the worlds. This One, this All of Life, so far as we are here concerned with it, is subject to Three Great Signata or Characteristic Signs or

Marks: it is *Impermanent*, and *Subject to Suffering*, and *without a Self*, or separate Soul.

How the Universe first came to be; what was its origin, the First Cause (to use a phrase the Buddhist would deem self-destructive, because involving a contradiction in very terms, a Cause being really a link in a series which is endless like a circle); who or what "made" it, and all such futile questionings as these were answered by The Buddha with the sole appropriate reply: with what the Buddhist Scriptures term "*the Noble Silence of the Wise*". The truth is, that to such questionings there *is* no answer; our world indeed had its beginning—it is detailed in an ancient Buddhist work in terms singularly like those of the modern nebular theory—but not the Universe; and, as The Master once explained, such questions do not tend to help us; they have no answers, or what answers one might

frame to them bring us no nearer to our object, to the End of Sorrow, to the Goal and the Fruition of all Life. Thus The Buddha to His interlocutor upon these subjects:

> It is as if a man, wounded in battle by a poisoned arrow, should say to his friends, when they came with a physician and an antidote, and besought that he should let the doctor salve that poisoned wound, or ever the poison won into his veins: "But no, I will not have the dart drawn out, or the healing salve applied, till I have learned whether the man who shot the arrow was short or tall, fair or dark, noble or base." That man would die, Mālaṅkyāputta, ere ever one of all these useless questionings could be replied to.

How true, and how appropriate to these problems as to the "Origin of Sin," of Life, of all the Universe; and yet—alas for the fatuity of human reason—it is just about such useless and vain problems that men have spilt more blood, have waged more cruel wars and persecutions than over any other cause of human disputation!

So it is that we find, in the more "doctrinal" part of the Dhamma, only that "Noble Silence

of the Wise" where all such problems are concerned. But it must not hence be imagined that Buddhism resembles the modern Agnosticism beyond the limits of this simple fact. Buddhism is a *Gnosis*; it has a positive, an active, as well as a negative or passive side in doctrinal affairs. Looking back, as the full Insight He had won enabled Him to do, over the long succession of His lives, the Teacher saw how through them all there reigned one ordered Law, the Law of Kamma (Skt. Karma) or of Action, the Law of the Doing of a being and its consequences on him and the rest of life. What gravitation is to mass—its fundamental property, not turned aside from acting, though other forces indeed may suspend the visible manifestation of its action for a while—all that, and more, is this Kamma to the conscious Life. It is the Law of Causation operating in the sphere of the Mind, that is to say, of Life: it is alike our Character (since our present mental

make-up is the outcome of our whole long line of lives) and our Destiny (since, in the Buddhist view, Mind, maker and fashioner of all that is, as it were *dramatises* itself as our environment, according to the sum of all our bygone tendencies); and yet again, seeing that it is in the very nature of Causation that *like* effect should follow on a given class of action, it takes the place held by the Deity in Theistic creeds—bringing happiness in the train of good, and pain in the wake of evil acts. We *are* our Kamma, in fact; and just as the mind, in a nightmare following on some over-indulgence in food, dramatises part of itself as the demon that pursues or haunts us, another part as the seeming "I" which is pursued, and yet another still as the environment—the World and Space and Time wherein the "evil Kamma" of that indulgence operates—so is it with the wider stage-play of the visible world about us in the waking life.

But here the occidental reader, trained in mental schools of various ego-centric faiths and views, will naturally pause. How then, it will be asked, how then, if indeed there be no self, no soul that on our death moves onwards, clothed in some cloak of subtle substance, or taking some new body in the flesh—how can the Buddhist talk of "earlier" or "later" *lives*; or how explain the fact that often, in the Buddhist Scriptures, the Tathāgata Himself concluded some tale of bygone lives with the words: "*That very person was Myself*"; if indeed there be no soul, no self, who speaks, thinks, acts, and suffers, who dies and takes rebirth according to the tenor of his deeds? To make the answer clear, recourse must be had to an analogy.

Two men are standing by the shores of an ocean, its waters heaped in undulations by the power of the winds. Both see the same phenomenon, but one is uninstructed, a man of clear intelligence, of the type termed

"common-sense"; the other learned in modern physics, conversant with the scientific aspect of the phenomenon before him. The uninstructed man will say: "There, on the horizon, is a mass of water, piled up in a wave; this mass of water so moulded by the winds, travels towards us over the ocean, and breaks at last here at our feet." But the instructed man will answer: "Not so, friend. What you see is but a seeming, a wrong interpretation of the facts your sight conveys to you; there is in all this wave-birth, wave-life, wave-motion, and wave-death, *no* single mass of water that so moves over the sea at all. Each wave in truth *is* in a sense one thing; but it is a child of *Force*, and not of *Substance*. All that is really happening is that *force* is being transmitted by these manifold waves; the water is moving, but with no motion of translation over the ocean's depths; it is but rising and falling as the *real* wave—the collocation of hydraulic

forces which give to it a temporary, but even so an ever-changing identity—passes onward, in the end to break here at our feet."

We know, of course, that the instructed man is right, and this is just the understanding of the Buddhist as to the Transmigration, the passing-over of each wave of life. All Life is One, as are all the ocean's waters; what goes on, not only from death to the new birth, but from hour to hour and moment to moment of our lives, is that the temporary collocation of life-forces called a being, resultant from the powers playing on that one life-wave, (the winds of Nescience, *Avijja*: Craving and Hate and Self-delusion, both in the past and now; interaction with other life-waves, and many other modifying forces) is passing onward over life's wide ocean, presently, perchance, to break upon Life's Further Shore, Nibbana, the Great Peace and Rest. Gazing with the far-reaching Inner Vision which the Holy and

the High can gain and use, both The Buddha and the other Indian sages of olden time saw this phenomenon of the sequent lives. But to the earlier sages, as to the uninstructed man of "common-sense," there seemed (as apparently their vision told them) to be but one changeless mass of being, separate from every other "soul," that, keeping its one self-hood through eternity, passed from the far horizons of life over its restless surface to the Goal. To The Buddha, seeing yet deeper, searching right to the Causation and the manner of it all, there was no immortal and enduring spiritual substance or *persona*—only a collocation of life's fluxing forces, changing not only at death and birth, the trough and crest of each successive wave, but every instant of its life. So to His deeper Insight, as to that of the modern physicist, there was no self, no separate mass of life at all; and what, for convenience of speech and

as a designation, we term our self—a "way of counting" as the Scriptures well define it—that is in very truth only an ever-changing Collocation of the elements of life, bound together by the power of Tendencies set going by this very dream of "I" and "Mine".

Otherwise regarded, we may summarise the body of the Buddhist doctrine under the headings of the formula used by The Master in His first lesson to the world, given to those same Five Disciples who had deserted Him in that sad hour when all seemed lost. That formula is known as the Doctrine of the Middle Way: the Way that leans neither to the extreme of Austerity, as practised by the Indian sages; nor to the extreme of Worldly Life, given over altogether to the pleasures of the senses. It consists of Four Āryan or Noble Truths. First the Truth of Sorrow: How all this individualised life, involved as we have seen in Change and consequent Pain

and Self-delusion, is *inseparable from Suffering*; since either we have, and (changing in our Kamma's ceaseless changefulness) we lose, some cherished object; or else we have not what we desire, and so again comes Pain. The modern student of biology may get an insight into this First Truth if he considers the humblest origins of life, remembers how the lowest organisms move and act only in response to *irritation*—as the modern term accurately and significantly puts it. The Second Truth is Sorrow's Cause: How *all suffering springs only from Desire*—desire to win for the sake of self-hood, for the sake, in very truth, of an illusion. Truth the Third is Sorrow's Ceasing: How, *by the culture of the Mind to see the truth in all things;* by constant deep endeavour to weed out the old "self's" ill tendencies, to sow new seeds of Virtue and of Love, *comes Paññа*, Wisdom, Insight—in the light of which the darkness of self-born desire can dwell no

more. Truth the Fourth is termed the Path-Truth: How, even in our very heart of hearts, there lies a Path, a *Way which leads from suffering life to Peace*; an Eightfold Way whereof the members compose a threefold inner training—restraint of Body (*action*), of Word (*speech*), and of Mind (*thought*).

Of that Noble Way the parts are these: (1) *Right Views*—meaning the Understanding that there is no self in truth, for Life is One, and One alone; the Understanding that this One Life is pervaded in all its parts by the three characteristic signs—Impermanency, Subjection to Suffering, and Absence of real Self-hood; and the Understanding how this life, and the motion of its innumerable parts is subject throughout to the causal Law of Kamma, which we can see in action every time we think logically and in sequence.[1] (2)

[1] Kamma, it must be understood, is no dogma or hypothetical principle; it is, obviously and palpably, to one who understands the teaching, all the time working in the daily thought-chains of our

Right Aspiration—the earnest *desire to help reduce the suffering of life*, and, by self-restraint and self-reform, to bring the Great Peace nearer unto all the world. (3) *Right Speech*—loving and kindly and true. (4) *Right Action*—avoiding evil deeds and practising charity in all our ways. (5) *Right Livelihood*—following a mode of obtaining our daily bread which inflicts no harm or hurt on any living thing. (6) *Right Effort*—the constant endeavor to suppress our evil tendencies and to cultivate the thoughts, words, and acts which lead to good, further classified as the Fourfold Great

lives. But for the fact that Kamma, Mind- or Life-Causation, is the fundamental Law of Life, we could not for two consecutive seconds remember our past, or frame an intelligible sentence in the mind; and as to the Buddhist teaching that this Kamma, at a being's death, causes an immediate rebirth to occur (a rebirth, according to Buddhist phrase, which "*Is not he, and yet is not other than he*"), that is merely a logical extension of the constantly perceived Law on the basis of the principle of the Conservation of Energy. A man exists now: an immensely complex bundle of mental forces; these must have been set going, since all things are *caused*, and the nature of Causation is that like breeds like; therefore the present mental make-up of a man must have had its origin in mental causes *set in motion in a similar life*. And the same argument applies to rebirth in the future.

Struggle: (*a*) the inhibition of old *evil* tendencies; (*b*) the inhibition of the acquirement of new evil habits and ways; (*c*) the careful constant cultivation, by dint of special mental practices, of *good* habits, noble and helpful thoughts (such as Love, Sympathy, Compassion, Charity,) already formed; and (*d*) the assiduous cultivation of such good qualities and habits of thought and life as are not already a part of our mental habitude. (7) *Right Watchfulness*—the continued *observation* of all we speak, think, do, following out in each the operation of the Causal Sequences, classifying each as "Good" (tending to *reduce* life's suffering), "Indifferent" (free from taint of Craving, Hatred, and Self-delusion, and so producing no new causal sequences at all), or "Evil" (tainted by one or other of these last three Modes of Nescience, and thus tending to set in motion causal sequences *adding* to the suffering of life). Besides this observation of

all our mental operations, and the discrimination as to their moral value, with the determination to cultivate the good in future and to avoid the evil, Right Watchfulness includes *the constant application to each and all of them of the Doctrine of Selflessness*—the practitioner thinking and observing, as regards each phenomenon, of Action, Speech, and Thought, of *every* mental modification that constitutes his life, without exception—"*This is not I, this is not Mine, there is no Self herein.*" (8) *Right Concentration*—the practice, according to the rules laid down in the books, of those high methods of Mental Culture which lead to the "Awakening" in the higher realms of conscious life; all directed to the entering and following of the Path of Peace, and the final Attainment of Arahanship, of Liberation from Craving, Hatred, and Self-delusion.

Such is the briefest of surveys of the third stage of the Buddhist practice—the stage of

Mental Culture; one from which we have been compelled, for want of space, to omit all but the most fundamental details. To the man who, by the practice of Virtue and Charity, has come to adolescence in his mental and moral growth, the Most Excellent Law here brings its final message. "By Virtue and by Charity," it says, "we avoid ill lives and win to good ones; but, seeing that all things pass to Change and Death, not even the good Kamma so made can last for ever. So long as we remain subject to Life and to Causation's Law we remain also subject to Death, to the wearing out of good as well as of evil Kamma. He who is truly wise seeks to *deliver* that fraction of the One Life which at the moment is manifested as himself from this subjection; he seeks to *realise the Final Purpose* of all this changing, suffering cycle of existence and rebirth. Beyond the highest Heaven—beyond aught that in this dream of life we

even can conceive—there reigns a State of Peace wherein there is no Change for evermore; wherein is no more Suffering; the Goal and the Fruition of Life, the Incomparable Security of Nibbana. If you can win to that, you bring all life a little nearer to its Goal; to win to it you have to realise the final Truth—the truth that *there is no Self at all*—that this certain-seeming self-hood is but a delusion, direst of all the bondages of Mind, of Life. Enter, then, on this Way of Peace: enter it by self-restraint, by self-renunciation. Live, work, strive, no more for self but for pity of all life: so, by reforming what appears "yourself," you may in very truth help to relieve the suffering of all life; and bring your little wave on life's great ever-surging ocean at last to break upon "Nibbana's Further Shore".

IV

The Saṅgha

The third of the Refuges is Saṅgha-Ratana, the *Treasure of the Brotherhood*—that community of Monks or "Homeless Ones" which The Master founded for those who wished to enter on a way of life far more conducive to swift progress on the Path than ever the purely worldly life could be. Besides this function, it has another: that of maintaining the racial recollection of the Truth The Master found and taught; the passing-on of the Dhamma; the teaching of the laity. From what has gone before it will be understood that the Buddhist *Bhikkhu* or Monk in no sense is the equivalent of the priest of the Theistic creeds; in a religion in which there is no Deity, wherein Causation reigns supreme, and no petitional prayer or ritual can bring a

man one jot the nearer to the Goal, there is no place for the "priest"—that is, for the intermediary between the layman and his God. Each man's own acts alone affect his future;[1] and no charms or rites or prayers can in the least alter the inevitable sequence of Causation's Law. But, as we have seen, *Charity* is an essential practice in applied Buddhism; and seeing that, in a truly Buddhist

[1] So far, of course, as he makes any sort of (Mind-born) Doing, or Kamma, *his own*, by dint of mental functioning; that is, by dint of *living* it. This view does then of course by no means exclude the possibility of one man's actions *affecting* another's Kamma. For example, we may hear of the life and Teaching of The Buddha; if we *choose to assimilate* what we can of that Teaching, and *choose to follow* what we can of the example of that great life, then our Kamma may become, even in a single life, so profoundly modified as to seem almost a different Kamma altogether. And such modification of a man's Kamma by his religious teachers, his loved ones, his friends, enemies—all who contact his life—is constant and considerable; it is analogous, in the wave-simile, to the effect of surrounding waves; except, of course, that in the intelligent, conscious life of man the element of *choice* comes in. Again, Kamma is far from being the *sole arbiter* of a man's Destinies: some sorts of Suffering (as a congenital disease) may, for example, be due to Kamma acting from past lives; but others may again arise from any of seven *other* causes: as, Heredity, Environment, the Seasons, and so forth. Thus the phrase must be regarded as, for the present moment, *conditionally* or only *mainly* true: it would only become absolute did we add the words "*in the long run*".

land like Burma, there are none who starve for want of food, it might be difficult to find suitable recipients for the large and constant charity of the Buddhist, this function is fulfilled by the Members of the Order, who are absolutely dependent on the laity for each day's food, for their robes, monasteries, books, medicines, and in general for their entire support. The layman's object in giving charity is to "make Merit," to pile up, as it were, good Kamma to his credit in the bank of life; so that he may come to better and nobler states of existence, may win to lives in which the entering of the hard Path of Selflessness, now impossible for him by reason of his manifold desires, may be found easier. Buddhist teaching also indicates that the effect of charity in producing powerful Merit depends on many things besides the mere value of the gift. It depends, for example, on the *motive* in the giver's mind; on the extent to which it involves a real act of

abnegation to him; and, finally, besides yet other considerations, very largely *on the moral status of the recipient.* Other things being equal, the holier the recipient, the greater the Merit of the person helped, the greater will be the fruits of an act of charity, in the way of potent Merit, to the man who gives.

Thus, on the one hand, to him who finds himself so far advanced as now to need to devote all his time to the practice of Mental Culture, the Brotherhood affords a state of life in which all those worldly cares which are so harmful to the needed peace of mind are absent; he has no more, once in the Order, to take thought as to how he shall secure his daily bread. And on the other hand, to the layman, desiring to practise the highest active virtue of his creed, the Brotherhood, by reason of the special holiness of the lives its Members lead, is, as the Buddhist phrase has it, "an incomparable Field of Merit"—a field which

will yield a richer harvest for the sowing of charity's good seed than well-nigh any other in the world.

The Brotherhood[1] consists of two classes—the Novices and the fully ordained Monks. The Novices have Ten Precepts to observe (the

[1] That is, using the term in its *widest* sense, as including every person who, under our Buddha's Dispensation, has adopted the "Homeless Life," received the *Pabbajja*, or "World-renouncing" Ordination, and who wears the Yellow Robe. *Technically*, fully-ordained (Upasampaṇṇa) Monks, or Bhikkhus, *only* are "real" Members of the Order whilst, again, in the *highest* (and the most restricted) sense in which the word Saṅgha may be used—that involved when we speak of the Saṅgha-Ratana, the "Treasure of the Brotherhood" to which the Buddhist turns as his Refuge and his Guide—it is no more even the majority of the living Bhikkhus; it then consists of that far rarer Great Brotherhood of *those who have entered upon the Path*: the Holy Ones, alike of the past and present, who, under our Master's Dispensation, have attained to one or other of the Four (or, according to another classification, one hundred and eight) Stages of the Way to the Incomparable Security. In this last sense, our Saṅgha-Ratana recalls the "Communion of the Saints" of the Christian creed. Thus looking on its Third Member, we might regard the whole Refuge-Formula as a species of *conjugation of the idea of Attainment*—Enlightenment, Awakening—in respect of the three Modes of Time. It is as though the Buddhist asserts: (1) In the *Past*, One—the Exalted Lord—attained and passed-utterly-away. (2) In the *Present*, in His Place we have Him living in His Dhamma—through which we may *now* attain. (3) In the *Future*, even *we* may yet attain—as the Communion of the Holy Ones, the Saṅgha-Ratana, ever exists to aid and to attest.

Eight Precepts before given, one of which here is divided into two, thus making nine of what were given as eight; and in addition a precept as to abstaining from the acceptance or use of money, or of gold or silver in any form). Any male above seven years of age may be ordained as a *Sāmanera*, or Novice; and in general practice in Burma, every boy so enters the Monastery and undergoes its discipline at some age between seven and twenty. Any Bhikkhu can ordain a Sāmanera, but only with the consent of his parents or guardians if a child; and, once ordained, the Novice can leave the Order at will at any time. He wears the Yellow Robe, takes food like the Monks, only before noon; and may own no property except such as is allowed to the Monks themselves. A Burmese lad is generally put into the Novitiate by his parents for a period of a few months, or a year or so; and thus well-nigh every man in the country has lived some time

in the Monastic Order, a fact on which the immense esteem in which the Monk is held largely depends. Every man has lived in immediate contact with the Brotherhood, and is personally acquainted both with the high standard of purity and holiness and of learning therein maintained; he also has practical experience of the restraints—so hard to a young and eager people like the Burmese—involved in the monastic life. In the Monastery, the Novice acts as attendant to the Monks—maintains order, draws water for drinking and bathing purposes, sweeps out the Monastery before dawn, sees that the sanded "walking-place" is clear of lives or leaves, and so forth. Besides these attendant's duties he learns from some resident Monk the special duties of his station, studies his religion from the Sacred Books, and joins the Monks at their united devotions, generally twice a day, at dawn and eventide. Before the establishment of secular

schools by the British Government, the entire education of the male population of the country was in the hands of the Monks; and, apart from the period of the Novitiate (designed more especially with a view to instruction in religion), a large number of Burmese boys still obtain their whole education in the village Monastery.

In commemoration of the Great Renunciation, the entry of a boy into the Novitiate is frequently made the occasion of one of those public festivals which delight the play-, movement-, and color-loving Burmese heart. Even poor parents will often save money for some time (a very hard task for the generous and, indeed, thriftless Burman) in order to give their sons a lavish *Shin-pyu* (making a Holy One), as the festival is called; and the *Shin-pyu* of a rich man's son is often a very grand affair. Personifying the Prince Siddhattha, the boy is dressed in regal robes and crowned;

and, after receiving all his friends in state, the little Prince rides round the village, mounted, if possible, on a white horse, in memory of white Kanthaka, the Bodhisatta's steed. A procession is formed, and amidst a great display of royal canopies and insignia, hired for the occasion from some theatrical company, it marches to the air of stirring music round the village to the Monastery walls. Here the Princeling must dismount and music must stop, for the little mystery-play has reached the point corresponding to the arrival of the Bodhisatta at the River Anoma, when He put off His royal robes and donned the ascetic's garb. Entering the compound, the lad bathes and is clad in a temporary plain white robe; and, so attired, makes his request, in the ancient Pāḷi formula, that the ordaining Monk will, "*Out of Compassion, and for the sake of the Attainment of Nibbana's Peace,*" grant to him the Yellow Robe. The Monk, assenting, gives

him the parcel of Three Robes, placed ready to his hand. The lad retires and robes himself in these, after having his head shaved; he then returns to the Monastery, where the ceremony of Ordination is completed by his recitation of the vow to observe the Ten Precepts of a Novice.

Full Membership in the Brotherhood may only be conferred upon a male,[1] of twenty years and upwards, who must be free from debt, the king's service, and certain specified diseases and deformities. It can only be

[1] Men only can now receive the *Upasampada* or Full Ordination. Originally The Buddha founded a *Bhikkhuni-Saṅgha*, or Sisterhood of Nuns, as well as the *Bhikkhu-Saṅgha* or Fraternity of Monks; and some of His most eminent disciples were members of this Community, which had its own Vinaya Rule, and its own Ordination, separate from that of the Brotherhood. This Bhikkhuni-Saṅgha, however, owing to the corruptions creeping into Buddhism in India—the fast-growing power of the Brāhmanical caste which caused this, and the increasing seclusion of women, which was one of the results of the priestly dominance—perished in India, and indeed elsewhere also (since at one time there were Nuns as well as Monks in Ceylon) some five hundred years after the Nirvāna of the Buddha (about the first century of the Christian era); as, indeed, the Master Himself had prophesied would be the case.

conferred in practice by a *Thera*—a Senior Monk, that is, one of at least ten years' standing in the Order; and he can only perform the ceremony in the presence of a technical *Saṅgha*—a Chapter composed of not less than ten fully-ordained Monks. The office of Ordination, as used in The Buddha's time, is read out by the Thera, in the presence of the assembled Chapter, in ancient Pāḷi. It is customary in Burma, likewise, to go through it in the vernacular, since so much Pāḷi is not likely to be known to the Novice desiring Ordination. The Thera who confers the Ordination is thereafter known as the *Upajjhāya* or spiritual Superior of the new Monk, to whom likewise an *Ācariya* or Instructor is allotted. For five years the Monk remains in *Nissaya*, or "dependence" on Superior and Instructor; thereafter he is permitted to dwell in a Monastery apart from such dependence; but not till he has acquired ten full years of

seniority in the Brotherhood does he become himself a *Thera*, an Elder. Thereafter he can himself, in the presence of a valid Chapter as detailed, confer the Full Ordination, take pupils, and generally act as the head of a community of Monks.

The Pāḷi title for the Monk is *Bhikkhu*, literally "the Mendicant," but in Burma this word is seldom employed outside the Order; the laity term their Bhikkhus *Hpon-gyi*, or "the Great Glory," and they are treated with the utmost deference and consideration. The younger Monks of a Monastery, accompanied by the Novices and the "Sons of the Monastery" (boys, that is, who are placed for their schooling at the Monastery, but who do not take Orders as Novices, and so can feed after noon) commonly go in silent procession, early each morning, round their village to beg their daily supply of food. Each Monk and Novice carries a large earthen

or iron bowl, sometimes, for convenience, slung in a string satchel over one shoulder; whilst the Sons of the Monastery bear each a large platter, or a pair of these, slung from the ends of a bamboo carried on the shoulder in the immemorial manner of the Far East, on which are placed various cups and dishes for the curries or seasonings to be taken with the rice. As the procession comes to each door it halts a moment, when the householder, or more commonly one of his womenfolk, (who has been up long before dawn cooking the day's supply of food), comes out and places a spoonful of plain rice in the begging-bowl of each Monk and Novice; and, if any curry-stuff is to be given, this is placed in one of the dishes carried by the boys. If that day there is no offering to be made, the householder comes forth and begs the Monks to pass onwards. The whole round is conducted, on the part of Monks and Novices, in unbroken silence;

and, when each house has been visited, or when in towns sufficient food for the day's consumption of all at the Monastery has been secured, the procession returns to the Monastery. Here the food, commonly re-heated by the Sons of the Monastery, is taken before noon. The bulk of the day is passed by the Monks in teaching their scholars, in studying the Pāḷi language and the Scriptures; in writing with an iron stylus copies of some sacred Scriptures on the immemorial palm-leaf, which till lately formed the chief writing material of the East, and such-like simple, pious work. Some few Monks, further, devote themselves mainly to the practice of *Bhāvana* or Meditation—the intent contemplation of some object physical or mental, with a view to the attainment of one or other of those higher states of consciousness of which mention has been made, and which form a very large subject by themselves, impossible here to deal with.

The Monk has to observe 227 coded Precepts; the whole course of his conduct being further regulated by multitudinous rules laid down by The Master as occasion arose. Of the three great divisions of the *Ti-Pitaka*, the "Three Baskets" or Collections of the Buddhist Dhamma, one, comprising five extensive works, to which, outside the actual Canonical Rule, is appended a still larger commentary-literature, is devoted solely to the Monastic Rule. There are Four Deadly Sins, each involving *ipso facto* expulsion from the Order: the breaking of the Precept of absolute Chastity—binding on Monks and Novices alike; the taking by fraud or violence of aught not given to him; the taking of life (here it is only the taking of *human* life which involves actual expulsion, though taking even the life of an animal would be regarded as a grievous offence against the Rule); and, lastly, the laying claim falsely to the Attainment of Arahanship or to the

possession of any superior, superhuman powers at all. This last is, with its minor theses, a most salutary rule, and has served, even for the long period of twenty-five centuries, to maintain the Dhamma of The Buddha free from all changes; it has made impossible, for Theravāda Buddhism, any additional "revelations" resultant from some Monk's proclaiming, for example, that he had had a vision of The Master commanding such and such an alteration in the "Truth and Discipline" to be made.

The Monk may own but Eight Possessions—his three Yellow Robes, his Begging-Bowl (which forms also his dish), his Girdle, his Water-strainer (used to filter his drinking-water, lest he should destroy the life even of an insect), a Razor to shave with (the head of the Monk is commonly completely shaven, the members of a Monastery doing this service for one another), and a Needle with which to repair his Robes.

The Monks of Burma are held in the highest esteem by the people, an esteem which the purity of their conduct and the high excellence of their lives fully justifies. In Upper Burma especially, (where the manners and customs of the people have not yet been so far demoralised by western civilisation as in Lower Burma, where the British occupation has been much longer), the deference shown them is most marked; a Burmese layman there will never address a Monk except in an attitude of obeisance; whilst all over Burma the Monk has actually an entire set of words to denote respect, used for his daily actions; thus he does not, as we might translate, "walk," but "proceeds," he "pronounces" instead of merely "speaks," and so on.

The Brotherhood of Burma dates back to the most ancient times, although local wars and other disturbances have on several occasions so reduced its numbers as to necessitate an

application to Siam or Ceylon for fully-ordained Monks to restore the impaired *Paramparā* or Apostolic Succession (of the Ordination). Some two hundred and fifty years after The Buddha's demise there arose in India a great Emperor named Asoka (the royal author of the Edicts already referred to), who became a convert to Buddhism and a most enthusiastic patron alike of the Teaching and the Brotherhood. Under his patronage, the then *Saṅgha-Rāja*, or Hierarch, summoned a Great Council of the Order—the third that had been held—and from this Council, after a revision of the Canon, missionary Monks were sent forth to various distant lands. Amongst these were two, the Theras Sona and Uttara, who came to Lower Burma, landing at what is now the town of Thaton, then a seaport, though now some twenty miles inland. This was the beginning of Buddhism in Burma. Into Upper Burma, it seems likely there later

* By Shin Arahan in Pagan dinasti during the reign of King Anoratha

penetrated some sort of degenerate Buddhism—probably one of the much later Tāntrika, magic-working sects which sprang up in India during the period of the Buddhist decline, and which had entered Burma from Tibet through the mountain-barrier in the north. This degraded form was, however, put an end to by the Burmese king Anoratha, who, incensed at the insulting refusal of the then king of Lower Burma, whose capital was at Thaton, to give him copies of the Pāḷi Sacred Books, attacked and sacked Thaton, and carried away to Upper Burma, to his capital city, Pagān, the persons of the defeated king and his family, as well as every copy that could be found of the coveted Sacred Books. Thereafter, moved by the study of their contents to atone somewhat for his evil action in fighting, he became, like a second Asoka, a staunch adherent of the purer Buddhism, and made the latter alone the state religion; the *Ari* or Priests of the

degenerate faith then prevalent in his domains being given the alternative of becoming lay officials of his government, or of entering the orthodox Saṅgha, which was thus for the first time established in Burma proper.

Finally we may add but this, that, so long as the Burmese people remain, as now, devoted to their Brotherhood and the beautiful Teaching which that Brotherhood not all unworthily enshrines, so long (and no longer) will they retain those great characteristics which have endeared them to every western author who has really entered into their lives and understood the meaning of their remarkable charity, their hospitality, and freedom from dire, sordid poverty. Buddhism is well able, by reason alike of its beauty and its obvious truth, to hold its own in the hearts of the people; and, whilst the contact with western civilisation has produced in certain directions a lamentable effect on the old high standard of

Buddhist morality,[1] there are already signs on every hand that the religion is now in the process of receiving, not a diminution, but a very active augmentation of its former strength. There are many evidences of the progress of this new Buddhist Revival: the appearance of great Monks, like the well-known Ledi Sayadaw, who, remaining no longer hidden in their Monasteries, go forth among the people and intensely stir them to better their ways; all over the land, again, there are new societies, forming for various religious purposes in the new spirit of the age. Even the subject of religious education, too long neglected, save by the merest handful of far-seeing women[2]

[1] The most terrible—and the most inexcusable—instance of this deterioration lies in the introduction of alcohol. The use of this curse was *practically unknown* in the days of Burmese independence; whilst now there is a spirit shop in almost every village of Lower Burma (British occupation, fifty years) and this state is slowly approaching in Upper Burma (only twenty-five years' occupation).

[2] Nowhere in the world, perhaps, is the status of woman so free as in Burma; a fact to which is doubtless due the high degree of activity and intelligence possessed by the Burmese women. Two out of the three Buddhist schools in the populous city of Rangoon

ie: A.V. SCHOOLS

The Anglo Burmese Wars:— First (1824) Arakan & Tenasserim ... Burmese had to give up claims to (Assam, Cachar, & Manipur. L. Burma. Second. (1852.) Pegu annexed. Third (1885–86) ...

and men, is now beginning to secure attention. Not the least sign of all, perhaps, is the fact that the Burmese are beginning to awake to the ancient missionary spirit of their Faith. Perhaps a thousand years after the last attempt in this direction, a Buddhist Mission was, in 1908 C.E., sent out to England; which, despite the exceedingly small scale of its operations (consisting as it did of but a single Bhikkhu and a few devoted laity), yet succeeded in establishing in that country a small but earnest body of accepted members of the Buddhist laity.

(and for long the only two) were started and have been maintained at no small expense by the far-seeing charity and wisdom of a Burmese lady, Mrs. Hla Oung. The bulk, further, of the petty trade of the country is in the women's hands; and there are few Burmese peasant women who do not supplement the family income, often very largely by personally making and selling such wares as clothes and scarves. Formerly, indeed, every woman was an expert at the loom, and the hand-loom was in every well-to-do household; now, unhappily, cheap Manchester goods have well-nigh killed that industry.

(Burmese Silk Production)
Now a days hand loom is still in use [illegible] Hobby [illegible]
young Burmese girls - mostly in Quaint towns [illegible]
the Sandar's type) Sandar's type loom is the loom of the
[illegible] with the weaving materials as from machine

THE THREE SIGNATA

In the ancient epic literature of Āryan India, the tale is told how once the wise and virtuous king Yudhisthira, the ideal pattern and exemplar, for that literature, of the man who follows *Dharma*, who, at whatever cost to self, unswervingly obeys the call of Duty and of Truth, when called upon to tell what fact in life appeared to him most passing marvellous, made answer: "Man's belief in an immortal life." Seeing on every hand but Death as certain goal and crown of life; seeing it, whether in man's fratricidal warfare, or in the grimmer, ceaseless strife whereunto Nature dooms each sentient living thing; seeing, in his own human world, father and mother, wife and child, friend and foe, great and mean, the wise and holy as the weak and

base, dying around him upon every side—each man still acts and lives as though himself were deathless, as though this universal power of death must somehow pass and leave *him* all unscathed. Death hems him in on every side, its terrors compass him about each day and hour; the teachings of the wise and great and holy of each land and age unceasingly reiterate the awful fact of its supreme, all-dominating might; so trivial in its immediate causation that a scratch, a thorn, a stumble by the way may yet invoke it; so imminent, it may be, in respect of days, that none of us dare say: "To-morrow," nay: "Next hour I shall surely live." Yet each man still lives as though all time yet lay before him; still rejoices in the petty pleasures of this threatened life; plans for his future; casts all his energies of life upon the die of worldly living; still loves and hates; works all his days for wealth, no penny of which he can take with him in the

end; battles with all his powers for this or that of this vanishing dream-life's fancied benefits; and, save for the thoughtful few, he never realises that close imminence of the end of all of it; nor understands that his own position is in truth but little safer than that of the death-sentenced criminal, before whom lie but hours ere he must look his last on earth and sky.

Why is this forgetfulness, this lack of understanding? By reason of Desire, by dint of man's joy in life, his craving for yet more and more of it at whatsoever cost; because, as ever with the uninstructed, thoughtless man, he follows his emotions and desires rather than the more clear-seeing guidance of intelligence; he dreams of himself as steadfastly enduring, thinks *he* must live, though all the Universe might pass; he craves for yet more of life so fever-thirstily, that all this ceaseless agony of death surrounding him is impotent to teach

him that he, too, must die. True, as a formula of words, he knows and will admit the truth of it; but as a fact, as real *understanding*, as realised within his heart of hearts, not so. Who, did he understand, could live the petty life of following the world's desires; grasp after this or that poor toy in this swift-fleeting life; give way to passion here, or hate or cheat or otherwise bring suffering to his fellow-sufferers there—did he but understand that truth, so pitiably plain: "Like all of these my brothers, I am doomed to die. To-day, to-morrow, in another year or years, and all this life that now seems all to me must, in a single moment, after some minutes, hours, or days of agony, pass from me evermore"? Who, that had grasped it, still could live the petty, pleasure-seeking life of worldly aspiration and inane futility? None, surely, who once had seen; and yet, as Yudhisthira marvelled untold centuries ago, despite life's daily

re-enacted tragedy, most of mankind, their insight utterly blinded by Desire's dark clouds, still deem themselves immortal and still live as though this little life were all; or, yet more pitiable still, dream of themselves continuing to eternity, finding about them those that here they loved, repeating throughout all the interminable æons the petty details of things they loved on earth; a life (so utterly in contrast to all life we know of) from which all pains are banished, wherein the petty pleasures of our life alone endure.

Some few, indeed, have seen further: one such I well remember now. Once, in a distant town, attending a funeral with other Monks, I found a little bamboo-monastery built by the burning-place; so near that one might watch, from its windows, the passing to the elements of what had once been living woman, man, or child. Only one Monk was permanently dwelling there, an old, old man, whose face,

despite his age, still shone with that strong inward light that may be sometimes seen in human eyes: the light that speaks of life nobly and greatly lived, that tells of glimpses of the Truth, of the Light beyond All Life whereof it is sign-manual and reflection. And so, courtesies made, I asked that Thera how it came to pass that he lived there, hard by the burning-ground; so far away from town or village; so dangerous, one might think, by reason of infection; so sad a dwelling-place, by daily wont of that last mournful scene of human life.

In reply, the Thera told me a little of the story of his life—how, as a boy and youth, eager and active and full of the desire for life, he had been burdened with a hasty, passionate nature, quick to take offence; and how, when such was given him, his whole mind would be so filled with wrath and hatred that no other nobler thought could find admission to his heart. Then, one day, in such access of

anger, somehow a new thought *did* come: he asked himself what good this anger did him, and to what end it might develop, if he should let it grow unchecked? Taking his trouble to a learned Thera for advice, he was answered in terms of the Master's Teaching in the Dhammapada: "*The many*[1] *do not understand —'All that are here must die': those who know this, for them all hatreds cease.*"

Sometimes—according to the nature and Kamma of each one of us, it happens that a few brief words, more especially when these have come out of the mouth of some great spiritual Teacher like The Buddha, strike upon our minds with a new and vivid sense of *reality*: seem gifted with an interior vital meaning that suddenly illuminates our mind, like a lamp brought into a darkened room. Before, without the lighted lamp, the darkness of the room

[1] "The many"—in the original *Pare*, "Others"; that is, the unthinking, unenlightened multitude; as contrasted with the thoughtful and enlightened few—those who understand.

seemed almost tangible; we felt as if surrounded by a wall in all directions; we moved forward hesitatingly, groping our way through the darkness, and that even when by the light of day the room is perfectly familiar. But strike a light in it; bring in the lighted lamp, and immediately our hesitance, our feeling of restriction, melts away; seeing, our path across the room at once is clear to us; the natural sense of freedom to move here and there returns. Just so is it when this mental experience occurs to us. In some strange way the words that so remarkably appeal to us seem to have kindled a clear light in the groping darkness of our mental chamber; our minds appear to have perceived a new, a deeper truth behind those words; in the light of this interior illumination our path through life, hitherto shrouded in darkness, all at once grows clear and luminous: and, from interior darkness and mental groping, arguing about it and about, we pass into a new

mental state of seeing clearly, understanding keenly and correctly what now is best for us to do.

So it was with this young man, when his teacher recited to him that Saying of The Buddha. He was a layman, but at once he left the world behind him, and, having entered the Order, he spent his days, whenever possible, in or near by the burning-ground, so that, by dint of multiplying those *Sankhāras*, those Mental Elements which were related to the consciousness of death, he might at length, in the deep Buddhist meaning of the word, come to *understand*: "We all here must die." So simple a lesson is that, that it is very hard to learn; for the simpler a thing is, the greater and more difficult is it really to grasp it; and, besides, in the case of this particular lesson, the element of Ignorance, of Not-understanding in our minds, cries out against the very thought of it. It is so difficult to learn that which our

minds, that which the greater bulk of our mental elements, do not *wish* to learn; and so most men never understand at all that simple fact: "We all must die."

But, by the falling of the water-drops, little by little the filter-jar grows full to overflowing: that is the great secret of all mental mastery, the fact which makes even self-renunciation grow possible, nay, acceptable and glorious at last. And so, to this young Monk, little by little the lesson came home; it grew daily in his mind to deeper and more solemn certainty; it shone daily brighter in his heart of hearts, revealing many a darkness-hidden Truth. In his new life as Monk, the manifold occasions to anger which the world's life presents and multiplies were, in the first place, largely absent; yet a few remained; and sometimes, even as Monk, he would find the old bad tendency to swift anger flame up in his heart at this or that trivial occasion of

offence. But, with the anger, by dint of the associating faculty of the mind, came, too, the thought he had prescribed to cure his wrathfulness: with each access of hatred there came the vision of that oft-repeated final mourning scene. With the thought of it, his heart would grow hot with self-reproach, with shame: "*He who knows this, for him all hatreds cease.*" And also he remembered One of whom His followers, at His death, could say: "*So passed away the Great, the Loving Teacher, who never spake an angry word.*"

Thus, with the passing years and growth of wisdom and true Insight, passed, for that Monk, the tendency to anger with which he had been born. As time went on, and he grew in the esteem of the laity, his supporters, seeing how he frequented the burning-ground, built him an abode hard by. Then, when I met him, he was very old, very high in the esteem of all

men in that district—men believed him to have seen somewhat of that high Path whose seeing is so difficult; and, for my part, I could well believe it to be so.

For there was not only that rare sense of the interior Light, the sense of Vision in the Thera's countenance: there was this simple story of a well-lived life. That man had seen a Truth, which is very rare and difficult in this sad world; he had *really* seen, because at once he had acted accordingly; and no man sees any Truth in actual fact who does not then and there commence to *live* anew. All the rest is talk.

I thought: Suppose that all of that man's life had brought no other Vision, no further fruit than that one Seeing of the Truth, how fortunate was he, thanks to the Holy One whose words so changed his life. For how many of the sons of men live life after life in this or other worlds, in vain? I thought of the

many men in my own country, where the Homeless Life is held in low esteem—because men do not understand the full value of true self-restraint—who would look upon that monkish life as lost, as useless to the world and to himself, because, forsooth, it lacked the lesser lessons that the care of wife and child can teach a man. It seemed to me that, had he learned that one Truth *alone*, had his life a little only served to teach it to his fellows, it were a life greater by far than most men can hope to live. To see one Truth and by example teach it: How greater far a life, how nobler far a service to humanity, than most men are privileged to live, to give!

But few there are with either Insight to perceive one Truth or strength to live accordingly; and still, as in the king Yudhisthira's days, men, seeing Death round them upon every side, can yet believe themselves immortal or act as if they did. Had the great Indian

king achieved the greatest of all blessings, for one so wise as he—had he heard the Teaching of our Master—he would not have marvelled only that men should deem themselves immortal in a world of death, he would have seen a threefold wonder greater still than that. How—so would his thought have run—living in a world where everything is in *transition*, most men still believe themselves exempt from this sure law of life, each dreaming that *something* in him still is deathless, changeless, permanent. How, living in a world so *full of suffering*, most men still think: "Somehow will *I* at least escape from pain; some time *I* shall achieve a life of pleasure only." How, living in a world whereof *the Life in deepest truth is One*—a world in which *there is no separate Self or Soul* at all, but only a ceaseless flux of life's elements from this one of its momentary collocations to that other—each man still looks upon himself as one, as a life separate from all

other lives to all eternity; his self, his soul or Atta or whatever he may call it, upon one side, and all the mass of universal life upon the other; Self *contra* Life; so he thinks—and, sorrow of the world that springs from it!—so he acts accordingly throughout his swift-completing days!

For this is our Master's Teaching of the *Three Signata*: the three great Marks or Characteristics whereby all life is determined. "*Whether Buddhas arise or whether They do not arise*"—that is, whether the life in any given world-system evolves so far as to include, at any given time, reasoning beings so far advanced in wisdom as, by their own Insight, to be able to perceive this universal Truth, or no—"*Whether Buddhas arise or whether They do not arise, it still remains true that all the Elements of Life are Transitory, . . . of Suffering inherent, . . . and devoid of Self-hood.*" So runs the Scripture, and in this threefold

Doctrine of the Signata lies the foundation of the whole Buddhist outlook upon life, the key-note, as it were, of the Buddhist philosophy or theory of existence; and, what in our Teaching is synonymous with this, the foundation of the whole great fabric of Buddhist ethics; since, to the true follower of our Master, *to understand* and *to live accordingly* are only the two sides—the static and dynamic aspects—of the one Truth The Master won and lived and taught.

Not only is the Doctrine of the Three Signata thus the very essence of our Buddhist Truth, theory and practice; it is also the chief feature which distinguishes Buddhism from all other existent religious systems; it constitutes, together with the discovery and enunciation of the Law of Kamma, and the Teaching as to the existence of a State beyond All Life, *Nibbana,* the especial contribution which The Buddha made to the sum-total of

religious Truth as known in His day. Our Dhamma, indeed, may be said to mark the ultimate and supreme achievement in the world of religious investigation and knowledge; it inherited from generations immemorial of Indian saints and sages the whole fruit of Indo-Āryan religious experience and development; in these three great Teachings—*Nibbana*, the *Doctrine of the Three Signata*, and the *Law of Kamma*—the Buddha added all that remained lacking to the final perfection of the Truth, so far as words are able to express the way to Truth's Attainment; and thus our present subject may be regarded as in a very special and peculiar sense a *Buddhist* doctrine, one which we find in no other great religion of the world at all. *Universal Causation*, the Law of Kamma, applied as rigidly to Life, to Mind, as modern science has applied it in the realm of physics; setting aside finally even the subtlest remnant of the old, animistic view of life—the

belief, natural to the uninstructed mind, that all this Universe was the outcome of the activity of some great spiritual Being or Beings; the *Doctrine of the Three Signata*, the characterisation of all possible forms of life as Transitory, Suffering, Unreal in their seeming Self-hood; and, lastly, the discovery and enunciation of a State beyond All Life, *Nibbana*, the Unconditioned Peace, the unthinkably vast Goal towards which, through fancied self-hood and through suffering, all life is slowly wending, a state[1] which was final, the Utter Peace, from which there should be no returning evermore—these three Teachings constitute the distinctively *Buddhist* element, as contrasted with all those elements of religious truth and practice in our Dhamma which were known in the Indo-Āryan

[1] Differing herein from the probably later, and derived, Hindu Nirvāna or Moksha or union with Brahma, in that this last was not eternal, seeing that after the "night of Brahma" was over, the whole weary round of the projection of universal life into a suffering manifold system of worlds must be commenced again—and so on to eternity.

world before the day of the Supreme Enlightenment.

One further peculiarity of the Doctrine of the Three Signata is that, through the recent marvellous developments of physical science, the western thinking world is now day by day receiving further demonstration of precisely these same linked-together characteristics of sentient and non-sentient life. That fact has a great importance, as bearing on the possible, or probable, future extension of our Dhamma in the West; for in the thought of the cultured classes in all western lands the teachings of science have by now well-nigh possessed themselves of the position formerly held by the old-time theologies. What that means, in brief, is, that—given time enough for the effects of heredity, and of human mental inertia, to have fully worked themselves out (and that, in the present progressive and transitional state of occidental thought, no long time either)—

it will become impossible for any great religion to retain even a nominal hold on the (ever more numerous) thinking classes, the fundamental teachings of which, as to the nature of life, are opposed to the knowledge derived from scientific study and investigation. But, since this Doctrine of the Three Signata, as well as the equally fundamental, equally important conception of Causation, is, as has been said, exclusively Buddhist,[1] we can clearly foresee that, given at most a century or two, it will be impossible that any existent religion save Buddhism only should survive, even nominally, in the cultured western world. Buddhism, and it alone amongst the world-religions, is founded on Causation's Law, destitute of the last faintest trace of animistic thought; it, and it

[1] In their actual Buddhist form; for the Hindu conception of Karma, although again, as with the idea and term Nirvāna, probably derived from Buddhist sources, has in its modern form, departed widely from the original, having become a simple system of rewards and punishments to the *Jīvātmas* or immortal selves of which Hinduism teaches.

alone, teaches this threefold nature of the universal life; both of these ideas are becoming every day more deeply realised as the result of progress in the great world of physical science. The recognition of Truths so great precludes—once the old inertia has worn off its effects—the acceptation of any view of life which is opposed to these great Truths; thus, it seems inevitable that Buddhism only of the world-religions can survive in face of the daily-extending conquests of the world of scientific thought and action; it alone can form the acceptable guide in the things of the higher, the interior life, for the women and men of coming generations of that western Branch of the great Āryan Race which of late, through the applications of that same science which is so profoundly altering all its old-time thoughts and views, has inherited the leadership of the nations of the world.

Having thus taken a general view of the nature, importance, and significance to the

modern world of the Buddhist Doctrine of the Three Signata, let us now pass on to the consideration of each of its three theses in detail. *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, *Anatta*—Impermanent, full of Suffering, void of Self-hood in reality: such are the three words wherein this doctrine is comprised; and, whilst each presents its own, and in a sense, separate, aspect of the truth about life, yet the three are in reality so linked together that it is often impossible, in discussing one, to avoid the introduction of another of the three ideas. Each, moreover, stands in an especial relation to one of the Three Modes of Nescience (*Avijja*)—*Lobha*, or Craving, *Dosa*, or Hatred, and *Moha*, Self-delusion. Each of these is especially opposed to the corresponding Signatum, which is not only its opposite in theory, but its antidote in practice—the means of overcoming it in actual life—thus ever do theory and practice go hand in hand in this our Buddhist Truth.

These Three Modes of Nescience are, as we might put it, the three fundamental forms of Not-understanding typical of the natural, the unenlightened mind. In such, *Avijja*, Nescience, manifests, first, in the wrong view that life, or at the least some portion of its content, is *Niccam*, Changeless, stable, enduring to all eternity. Of course—and here at once we come to that inextricable linkage of the Three Modes and Signs already noted—it is his *self* which the unenlightened man thus regards as in the first and most important sense a changeless being. Secondarily, and indeed as a development of this misconception, thus still truly falling rather in the domain of the Third Sign and Mode, the thought of Changelessness is attached to the man's conception of his God—whether that idea, as with the lowest American Indian savage, is conceived of as a mere material fetish, his "medicine"; or whether, with the

highly-advanced and subtle-minded philosopher, that crude conception of the Greater Self-hood has widened to the thought of an infinite Godhead, conceived as having made or emanated all this universal life. But, quitting for the present this primary object whereunto the natural man applies his attribute of Changelessness in the highest, most essential degree, we find he further attributes permanence *to all those objects which* to him, howsoever developed according to his Kamma, *represent the Goods of life.* To the pure worldling, wealth and the objects of his passions, wife and child, place and power and all he can *possess*, take on, more or less according to the extent of Nescience's First Mode in his mind, this aspect of things changeless and eternal. Though he be utterly destitute in actual life, the man in whom this *Lobha* is uppermost will grasp at any idea involving even future possession of these "Goods" of life: here, indeed, and now,

he may be a slave, but somehow, somewhen, perhaps by some propitiation of the Greater Self-hood, of his God-idea, he will win a life wherein all wealth, all power, all objects of his lusts will be his own for evermore; he will wear a veritable golden crown and live in a palace built of precious stones, to take the very material concept of a seer of that strange, wealth-loving race, the Jewish—a race so generally given to the life of sense, so crudely materialistic, but which here and there, now and again, brings forth a character of rarest philosophy or highest spirituality, like some fragrant rose grafted upon the thorny briar-tree.

With a higher type of mind, the natural man will still thirst for fancied, changeless "Goods" —possessions—but, with his higher mental growth, the object of his craving will be subtler, higher, nobler. No more desiring ownership of the other sex merely for gratification of his passions, he will seek his wife

in hopes of finding a mental and spiritual companionship. Craving no more for worldly wealth, he will still be eager for the fruits of fame, he will have the nobler ambition to be renowned for some great work amongst his fellow-men. But, however far he may have grown beyond his humbler brother of the purely worldly type, however nobler may be the objects of his desire, there will still be for him *some* good thing to be sought and lived for; to that, as ever, his mind will attribute this "Changelessness". Is he an architect? He will talk of "building to eternity". Is he a lawyer or member of the law-making, ruling caste? He will indite his legal deeds or acts—"Forever, so long as the Throne shall endure." Is he a soldier? He will speak great words about the Flag that he has served—"Flying as long as the sun shall rise upon this land". An author or an artist? He will speak of the immortality of

his "work". And so on always, and with all men. Some things, to each, seem good in life, make life worth living: things gross or subtle, low or high, as is the nature of the man who thinks. To those things always, that is, to his possession, his ownership of them (or, growing more developed, perhaps not only directly his, but his Caste, his Country, his Religion), always to those things will the natural man attribute *Niccam*, Changelessness. Because they are "Goods" in his eyes, therefore they must be eternal and unchanging; because he conceives these "Goods" as changeless does he thirst for their possession. What man will crave for aught he understands is fleeting as the winds, gone in a little from his life for evermore? None, that is sane, assuredly; and thus it is that men, having this wrong view as to the existence of things Permanent, Changeless, in this life or in another, fall into *Lobha*, the Passion of Possession, the Craving

Thirst to have and to own, which constitutes the First Mode of Nescience.

The Truth, the great Truth, that the incomparable Insight of our Master won for us (so far as we can understand it) is that in fact there is nowhere in life, in this world or another, above, around, below, any single thing that is not at this very moment changing—passing, even as we think of it, from Birth, through Life, to Death. Man builds his pyramids, his shrines to all eternity; and ere the stones be fast cemented, already the invisible work of dissolution has begun. A little time, long-seeming, peradventure, if you measure by the short span of man's generations, yet as naught when meted out by the vaster unit-scale of geologic age, a little time, and lo! a pile of dust ploughed over by incurious peasants, a broken shaft or two, a stone inscribed with characters that none can read! "Forever and always, so long as the Throne shall

endure," the legislator writes; so wrote they, in such words, before the "King of Kings," the "Lord of the Two Crowns," in ancient Egypt and Chaldæa; and to-day, after a hundred dynasties have gloried in power and waned and died, our children gaze upon the crumbling mummy that once was Rameses the Great. "So long as the sun shall shine upon this land our Eagles shall rule over it," cried the Roman generals; but where on earth to-day endures one vestige of Rome's iron might? To-day, in little-altered words, our generals boast it, to-morrow (if haply men shall grow no wiser in the meantime than to slay each other like the brutes), to-morrow the same words will be proclaimed by men not-understanding of a nation yet unborn. Empires of man with all their pomp and boast of world-extending domination rise, and move a little, and are no more; another and another comes, and each has learned no lesson

from its predecessors; each makes that fatuous boast of everlasting life and power. Swiftly, as one with the æonian Vision of the Gods might see it, swiftly they follow on another's steps through Time's unending halls; and the names of them, the memory of their little fleeting greatness upon earth, have perished from the knowledge of the wisest. We, too, are hurrying in their footsteps, swept onwards by the winds of Nescience, whither we cannot see; only this we know, a little while, and naught that is of us shall still endure!

Men prate of the Eternal Hills, that—could we see with that æonian vision—would seem to spring up whilst we watched like some swift-growing vegetation, to rise in their height and adamantine strength, and in the eventide, cut by the softness of the waters, the dust of them, cast wide amongst a hundred lowly valleys, would lie before our eyes, another fertile delta won for man's habitation from

the seas; of the Eternal Stars, the changeless Heavens, that to the seer were as whirling dust-streams, as light-motes shuddering in the winds of universal life. And, passing ever onwards as our time-sense and our vision widened, we should see the unthinkably vast æons whereof our Scriptures tell us—the ages wherein a "great ten-thousand-world-system" springs into being, thrills for a little while with life and then is gone—slip by into eternity without cessation; and ever, as our Insight deepened, ever swifter and swifter without any end. Chaos would waken, shuddering with torture, into life, to Cosmos for a moment's seeming; the unfathomable depths of empty-seeming spatial darkness flash to an instant's trembling life; the Vast Emptiness be filled with hurrying stars and galaxies past thinking, gleam for a little while and then be lost in gloom forever; and through the whole of it, life hastening through the gates

of Pain to Death; a horror of living past conceiving, full of the Pain of Being, darkened by Not-understanding; thrilling with Hope in youth, and ever ageing in Despair! Nowhere stability, nowhere cessation, nowhere an instant's slackening of that mad race of life; from the ephemeron, the insect of an hour's endurance, to the age-long existence of a great world-system, only Change, and hastening onwards, the wail of birth, of life's endurance and of Death! Nothing endures, neither the greatest of man's works nor the firm-seeming earth; swept onwards ever by the winds of life, the very heavens with all their galaxies of stars themselves are hurrying to never-ending Change. That is the Truth our Master's Insight won in place of man's false hope, his vain belief in Changelessness; and that, too, when one can truly grasp it, is the sure antidote for *Lobha*, Craving, the primal Mode of Nescience. Know that—see how in life

there is nothing one moment changeless, truly stable—and the Craving Thirst for this or that of life's imagined "Goods" will pass for ever from the heart; for only, truly, by reason of his desire-born thought, these things that man so longs to have and to hold seem permanent.

This is one of the principal directions along which all our modern science is leading the western Aryan Race in lines closely parallel to Buddhist thought. The early pseudo-science of Europe, based not on facts, upon experimental work, but on mere fancies—on what men *thought* must be the fact or upon so-called revelation—was, by the natural Nescience of man's mind, penetrated through and through with ideas and dogmas as to the permanence of this and that. First the Greater Self-hood of the Godhead; next the lesser self, the soul of man; and, following these, the fixity of the earth, about which, in the old Ptolemaic

system of those days, the moon, sun, planets, and the crystal sphere of heaven all circled in eternal revolutions; and so on throughout the range of human knowledge or pseudo-knowledge of those days, all that man deemed good was eternal.

The first great blow was struck against the old delusions, the first step made towards our modern science, when undaunted by fear of the consequences, Copernicus put forward the theory of celestial mechanism which now bears his name and is the foundation of our modern astronomy, the theory that the earth was no stable, firm, enduring centre of the Universe, but itself a minor planet circling round an immensely distant star. Despite the persecution of the Churchmen, who well saw how the ideas involved in Copernican astronomy must, if accepted, ultimately overcome the teachings of their Church and of the Bible; despite the fact that the Copernican

system demanded so immense a widening of men's conceptions of the Universe, with corresponding diminution of their views as to their own hitherto supreme importance on the earth; despite the great difficulty, at that time, of explaining why, if the earth were but a globe, a planet, all unattached objects did not fall off the underside of it; despite all these difficulties—and the fact that so far it lacked a proof, the inherent likelihood of this new theory of astronomy—the ease with which, by it, the peculiarly looped apparent orbits of the outer planets were accounted for, won for it a rapid acceptation at the hands of the great astronomers of the day. A little later Kepler, throwing aside another of the old dogmatisms of the scholastics, that the heavenly bodies could only move in orbits either circular or forming a system of circular curves, took the next step. He, after years of immense labor spent on his predecessor's observations of the positions

of the heavenly bodies, proved conclusively that the planetary motions could all be accounted for on the supposition that their orbits were *elliptical*, with their primary situated in one of the foci of the ellipse. Again in a few decades, followed the supreme achievement which cleared away the last remaining difficulty of the Copernican theory, when Newton, once more as the fruit of a mathematical labor simply stupendous with the existing methods, brought forward his great discovery of the universal Law of Gravitation, and proved the truth of the Law of Inverse Squares as applied to the orbit of the moon, from the known data of its parallax, its motions, and the velocity of falling bodies on the earth.

The second Sign or Characteristic of all Life is *Dukkha*: how all existence, changeful as we have already seen, is *fraught inalienably with Pain.* Here again we see how these Signata are interwoven and interdependent.

Just as the natural man desires such "Goods" of life as he imagines to be *permanent*, so it is the very fact of its Impermanency that is largely responsible for this second feature of life's Painfulness. Looking at the matter from the higher standpoint of our very advanced, five-khandha'd, rational type of being, from the view-point of mankind, The Master well exhibited and summarised this connection in His First Sermon, the "*Establishment of the Kingdom of Truth*". He pointed out how, having some cherished object, the Impermanence of all things presently results in its destruction, and so comes Suffering.

Leaving the highly developed domain of conscious, thinking life, and descending to the lower end of the scale of sentient things, we can further gain a valuable insight into this Truth about Suffering if we consider the result of modern investigation into

the lowest forms of life. In the realm where life such as we know is, as it were, but in the making, it has been shown how every motion of the simple organisms involved takes place only in response to what has been well-named *irritation.* That irritation may be applied from without, or it may arise, as it were automatically, from within, in consequence of the wastage of tissue, the breaking-down of the complex living structure that continues as long as life exists. It is as though life in these low organisms were always on the point of going out—lapsing backward, so to speak, into the mineral kingdom. But the organism can *feel*—in some dim way—and this power of feeling, this ability to suffer pain, to respond as a whole to irritation, is the fundamental fact which underlies the Sign of Life we Buddhists term the Pain-Truth. For the living, lowly organism, as for the more advanced, there is no rest: ceaselessly,

remorselessly, living matter finds itself forced to make new efforts, new attempts to adjust itself to its changing environment. Ceaselessly, in the constant flux of life, the outpouring of molecules from the collection which we call the amœba or the coccus, reaches a point where the stability of the whole somatic life—the card-house, as it were, of the whole complex living structure—is threatened with dissolution; the tremendously complex living molecule is, as it were, in danger of toppling over or of caving in, unless new molecules be brought in from outside. The result of that is Pain, or rather in this connection, perhaps the scientific terms, Irritation or Stimulus, are preferable, as less anthropomorphic; but both are included in the Buddhist concept of *Dukkha*, which ranges even below the level that we regard as the limit of sentient life. In response to that irritation the whole organism begins to *move*—the amœba beneath our microscope flows

forwards, there is no better word for it, like a little lump of living jelly. As it goes, it encounters the various objects with which the water-drop it lives in is littered; contact therewith again produces *Dukkha* upon the delicate surface of the tiny organism; and by the time it has become, so to speak, conscious of this new source of irritation, the living jelly of the amœba has surrounded it, altogether embedded it in its living substance. This it may do, indifferently and without discrimination (owing to its low place in the scale of life) whether the object be a pain-causing speck of gravel or a nourishing diatom or desmid. If the former, however, the amœba—presumably by dint of the growth, in place of diminution, of its perception of pain—presently flows away, rejecting it; if the latter, the living jelly in contact with it begins to break up into proteolytic ferments, so digesting it. For this amœba, lowest known

of organisms, has no differentiation of its substance into specialised organs; whatever part of its cell-wall comes in contact with nourishing material becomes, for the time being, its stomach, digesting its new scraps of food. And thus the amœba lives, in a ceaseless flux of being, unremittingly goaded on, as it were, by irritation, internal or external—and that is the prototype of all sentient life.

Nor is it only in what we are accustomed to regard as "living" matter that this responsiveness to irritation manifests. Even in the mineral kingdom the rudiments of such responsiveness are clear, differing from those of the domain of actual "life" only by their relative simplicity, as we might expect from their relatively less complex structure. Really, we might almost regard *all* the motions of matter as being in some sense a rudimentary manifestation of an attempt to find relief from pain, from some external force which imposes, as we justly

say, a "strain" or "stress" upon the thing that moves. Take, for example, a magnetic needle. This is surrounded by its own magnetic field, and so long as it lies in any direction save that of the magnetic meridian, the earth's magnetic field twists and distorts the little field of the needle, pulling on this group of force-lines and pushing that. If it be free to move, that is, if it be so suspended that motion would not involve a greater effort than the distortion of its field imposes on it, it will swing and dip so as to lie precisely in the magnetic meridian —or as near to it as its support allows. It is as though the needle, over-stressed by the straining of the earth's force-lines, moves round so as to free itself from the pain the stress involves, it moves, as we say, into the place or line of "rest," or of "least resistance".

Further still than such simple and fundamental responses to external stress, recent research has shown how matter—even such elementary

forms of it as wires of pure metals and the like—exhibits under certain conditions an actual, positive response to irritation differing only in degree from that displayed by such highly organised "living" matter as a nerve. And still, nearer simulating life, it even can "remember"; a wire which has once been twisted slightly and then untwisted is no longer the same as before; it has had an "experience" which for long will produce a demonstrable effect on it. The difference in response to external stimulus between so-called "dead" matter and a living organism is simply a difference of *degree*. It is, so to speak, in hopes of finding, by combination, some way of escape from the constantly recurring irritations or straining to which it is subject. We may conceive, that certain sorts of matter first united into those great molecular complexes which, owing to their high degree of impermanence, the more rapid flux of their stream of incoming

and outgoing molecules, became the first living organisms on our earth.

All evolution tells the same sad tale of life's everlasting hope, if one might so express it, of finding some Way of Peace; or, put in terms of the immediate necessity, hopes of finding escape from danger, pain, hunger, fear, and all of Nature's ruthless goads. The ancient doctrine (it goes back at least as far as the earliest days of ancient Egypt) of Vicarious Atonement, the idea that the Divine incarnated Itself on earth in this or that living being for the uplifting of the animal man, seems like a dim attempt to give expression to this fact about life. But, unhappily, like so many ancient doctrines, it is just the *reverse* of the real fact—to state it truly one must invert it. The truth is, not that the Divine is incarnate in life, in us, or in another, to bear our sins and take our punishment, but that, by Nature's ruthless laws, the *lower* in life is ever being sacrificed

for the benefit of that which is *higher*, more developed. All evolution spells that lesson, with its terrible teaching of the "survival of the fittest"; its constant sacrifice of type after type in the struggle for existence; and the higher, the more developed in strength, whether of claw and beak and muscle, or of the mind of man, the more, up to a certain point, does the advanced being prey upon the lower—till all Nature is a shambles, a slaughter-house wherein no thought of pity ever enters. Even so-called "civilised" Man, inheriting this dire lack of Understanding, preys on his fellows, and on the weaker things below him; even, alas! to the extent of making the death-agony of highly sentient animals one of the foremost of his foolish "games" or "sports".

It is very largely just this fact of Suffering—not as the mere occasional *accident* of life, but as its invariable and inalienable *incident*—that, borne in slowly upon the resenting mind

of the West by the discovery of Evolution with its grim "survival of the fittest" and the growing comprehension of the facts of life, has done so much to lead the advanced thinkers of the modern world away from the old religions, to bring it daily more and more in line with Buddhist thought. For, in deepest truth, the whole question really lies right on this point, so far as what I may term the emotional, the *feeling* side of mental life is involved. So long as men were ignorant about the facts of life, so long as they could blind themselves to the terrible meaning of evolution and its attendant horrors, they might well say, in the poet's words: "God's in His Heaven: All's well with the world!" That is what man *wishes* to believe; hence, for many a succeeding generation, it has seemed to him, despite his own direct experience of life, to represent the truth. If the Self-theory be a fact; if indeed there be a Greater Self-hood which has made or emanated

this universal life; if, further, there are in life those eternal, permanent, enduring "Goods" imagined on that theory, and the Greater Self be really supreme, all-powerful—then, of necessity, it must follow that the "Ills" of life will not predominate, nay indeed will not exist at all in such a world.

Against all our old teaching and beliefs and hopes, we of the West are slowly learning now that in fact the world we know is very terrible; learning how the very wit to understand these things has only been won for us by dint of the unthinkable suffering of the lower types of life through countless ages. Learning all that, we slowly come to understand that all our deepest hopes must be abandoned, all our old-time thoughts must take some new direction. We see how even the most heartless man, to say nothing of a higher Being, could never, given omnipotence, have devised that fearful Law of the lower life, have made a world

wherein every advance could only be won at the cost of pain past measuring; and pain—and there the greatest pathos of it lies—always to the weak, the sick, the feeble, the poor, just the type of being on whom its lash falls without the mitigation that strength, that health, that higher growth, and wisdom bring. That slowly growing *comprehension of the Pain-Truth*, on the side of the emotional life, that is, in the thought-realm of *feeling*; and on the philosophic side—the realm of pure *thinking*, the growing *understanding of the meaning of Causation*—these two great discoveries and fundamental principles of modern science as of ancient Buddhism are the forces that above all else are leading the West-Aryan peoples away from all their old religious systems. They must, in years to come, lead them more and more potently into that one religion wherein they take their right position as leading principles upon which all Truth must needs be built.

The practical application of this Pain-Truth lies just here: That, knowing Pain and fearing it, as we all know and fear it; understanding how it is the common lot of sentient life, we ourselves should live, above all else, *so that our lives may add no smallest further load of suffering* to this great burden of the Pain of Life. We now have "survival of the fittest," the Law that might makes right and that the weakest things of life must bear the burden of its pains, what time the strong and cunning make of their shrinking bodies a soft path for their feet to tread; that cruel rule is indeed the Law of Nature, the ruthless principle of life and action throughout the lower kingdom of the animals. Whilst it is even yet the Law also of the natural man (since he, too, is of the brutes, close kin to them alike by his heredity and by his character), it never is the Law for whoso but a little *understands*; for thinking men, who seek to follow in the Path announced

by Him of Perfect Pity. The one thing that differentiates Man altogether from the brute, that mental faculty, no faintest germ of which is found in the animals, is Pity, Sympathy, Compassion. For that is *Pañña*, Insight, as manifested in our mental sphere; the perfect Understanding of the meaning and the pathos and the purpose of this life that seems so terrible; that is the faculty of our minds which, far more than all the rest, we should ever strive to cultivate and practise in our daily lives. That is the Power that brings our wearied feet at last upon the Holy Path; and that high Pity only, when we have cast away the self's dire bondage of delusion, can give us strength further to live, to live for the love and service of this so pitiable and so suffering life.

To the Second Sign, this Fact of Suffering, the Second Mode of Nescience, *Dosa*, Hatred or Passion, stands opposed. *Dosa* includes, in its

full sense, *all* Passion,[1] not Hate alone; but Hate is herein typical, founded as it is upon the special not-understanding of the fact of Pain. Its antidote lies in that understanding; once see how all this life, including the particular object of our anger, is involved in Suffering, and at the very thought of it, Pity awakes and kills our thought of hate. When a pet animal, a cat or dog, is in great pain, often it will try to bite the very hand of its own master, the hand that is trying to bring the suffering thing some respite from its agony. Who, under such circumstances, would let his anger rise against his poor dumb suffering friend? The very fact of it, telling us how great its pain was, would make our pity and our love stronger. Just so it is with all forms of this Second Mode of Nescience, all kinds of *Dosa*, Passion, Hate. He who realises

[1] All *antagonistic* Passion, that is, such as the passions of Fear, of Loathing, etc.—but not, of course, passions of *attraction*, sex-desire, the desire for possession, etc., which fall under *Lobha*, Craving.

in his heart of hearts how terrible is all this Pain of life can no more hate; that understanding fills the heart with that divinest light of it, Compassion; and, as in the story that I told you of the Monk who once was prone to anger: "*He who knows this, for him all hatreds cease!*"

Lastly, as the third of the Three Signata, comes *Anatta*, the Doctrine of the Non-Self, of the non-reality of the seeming individualisation of life; the teaching that there is in truth no self, no separate soul or entity apart from life at all. Otherwise put, we may here express The Master's Teaching in the words "All Life is One". This is the profoundest Truth our Master won for us—a Truth so deep that none in fact can truly, fully know and live it till they have won the Arhan's Final Peace. But, however far we may be from that supremest Wisdom, we may still make a beginning, may teach ourselves a little more of this great Truth, so hard to understand, so utterly hard to live.

Those of you who have fulfilled the Burmese custom of entering the Monastery as Sāmaneras, will probably have had given you, as your first lesson, a book containing the Pāli of the *Khuddaka Pātha* to memorise. That *Khuddaka Pātha* is a sort of little Manual for Novices; it contains, in very concentrated form, much of the deepest Teaching of The Buddha; and such beautiful poems as the *Sermon on Blessings*, the *Hymn of Love*, and the *Hymn of Treasures*. Just at the beginning of it, following the Refuge-Formula and the Precepts, come the *Ten Questions for the Novices*; these Ten Questions and their answers contain the fundamental elements of the whole great Buddhist Teaching, expressed in very technical and concentrated form. First of the ten is *Eka nāma kiṁ?*—"What is the One Norm?" And the answer runs: *Sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*—"All beings depend for their existence upon Nourishment (*Ahāra*)." That, like much of

this very technical and compressed Buddhist Teaching, seems at first sight to be a mere obvious platitude; and the careless student is apt to pass it by as having no importance or bearing on the religious life at all. In reality, it is of supreme importance, as is frequently the case with such brief trivial-seeming enunciations of our Holy Truth; or else, indeed, it would hardly find place here amongst the Ten Chief Teachings which even the very Novice must learn and understand.

The Buddhist conception of life, that is to say of the Universe,[1] may be summed up, as already stated, in terms of the formula—*All Life is One.* Just as all the waters of the ocean are *one water*, and one body of water, so is it with this universal teeming life; and just as,

[1] Since all Buddhist Teaching is from the dynamic rather than the static aspect, it treats of things only from the standpoint of Consciousness (in the very widest sense of the term), not from that of Matter; or, as we would put it, it is couched in terms of *Nāma*, the Norm, as contrasted with modern science, which, dealing so far mainly with the non-sentient world, is couched in terms of *Rupa*, Form.

in the great ocean, there is, and can be by the very nature of it, no individual body of water separate from the rest, so in life's ocean there is —and can be by the very nature of it—no single separate unit or body of life, whether it be the highest or the lowest, most subtle or most gross. As with the sea, the waters of life's ocean are in continual movement (the First Sign); stirred by the winds of Nescience, impelled by Craving, Passion and Self-delusion (our *Lobha*, *Dosa*, *Moha*), the ocean of being is cast into countless waves. Each *Satta* —each living being that our Nescience makes us regard as an individual, a real and separate entity, a self or soul or Atma—is in truth only one such wave, whether a billow or a ripple only, upon the surface of life's ocean. Just as waves in the sea *seem* each to consist of an individual mass of water which, rising in one place, travels across the surface of the deep—so, to one gifted with the inner Vision (but not with

the Insight also of The Buddha or the Arhan), it seems as though the various Sattas travel on the vast pilgrimage of life. When, at one point of time and space our wave arrives, one who so watches will say: "So-and-so now again takes birth." When the wave, after a duration of life more or less long, passes away from the point observed, the onlooker will say: "So-and-so now dies here, but continues to live (he looking a little further on) in such-and-such a sphere of life, is reborn in such-and-such a place." Just as the only *real* wave is no *individual mass of water*, but a complex *collocation of hydraulic forces*, themselves constantly in process of minor modifications—so is the *Satta* no individual unit of life; there is, in any living being, no self or soul separate from all else in life. The only *real* "individuality" there is, is an immensely complex collocation of life-forces; which forces are every moment causing new life-elements (new particles of

water) to enter into that motion which as a whole we call the "wave"; and likewise are every moment causing other life-elements to pass away from participation in the being of that particular life-wave. These causal forces are themselves being constantly modified, by surrounding waves, by our intercourse with our fellows, by the winds of Craving, Passion, Self-desire, that still are breathing on them from their past.

Further, just as the wave is component not only of water, but of material solids, like salt, dissolved in that water; of gaseous matter, air and other gases, dissolved in that water; and, beyond this, æther itself, the æther in the intermolecular spaces of water, salt and air; that bound up in the complex water-molecules themselves, and so forth—so does a *Satta*, a living being, contain, at any one moment, life-elements *on every plane* on which its development enables it to function. I say "contain,"

but one might (but for the possible misunderstanding of a materialistic teaching) almost say "consist"; the fact might better be expressed by saying that the "real" wave—the collocation of life-forces or Kamma—*finds temporary expression* in that thus-arranged mass of the life-elements of all the different planes which together constitute the range of its functioning. Just as the actual wave could not exist for an instant if it did not every moment receive afresh the physical water, salt, air, æther, and so forth, the thus-putting-together of which constitutes its momentary expression—so is it with the living being, the wave of life.

With a Five-grouped[1] being like a man, every *Khandha* or Group of him is constantly in

[1] This paper, it must be borne in mind, was written for a body of students already thoroughly conversant with the rudiments of Buddhist Teaching. For such as have not that knowledge, it may be explained that Buddhist metaphysic differentiates Man into Five Groups (*Khandhās*) *viz.*: (1) *Rupa*, the Body or Form-Group; (2) *Vedana*, the Sensation-Group; (3) *Sañña*, the Perception-Group; (4) *Sankhārā*, the Tendencies or Kamma-elements; and (5) *Viññāna*,

parallel, dual process of both intaking and upbuilding, and of down-breaking and rejecting. But nothing can serve to build new "momentary expressions" for him but matter already on the level of the Group whose upbuilding is involved. A sentient, living being, the very life-elements that go to build up his body must themselves be far above the merely mineral world. *Life alone can feed life*, and, as we can see at once from the wave-analogy, the supply must be continuous, concordant with his Kamma's need to find particular expression. Thus even the lowest of his Groups, his Body-Group or *Rupa-khandha, must be fed with matter that has once had life.* Only, in terms of modern biology, the complex proteid, fat, and carbohydrate compounds, which living organisms (whether of the vegetable or animal kingdom) are able to

the Consciousness-Group. Each of these Five Groups is, as the name implies, itself an immensely complex collocation of life-elements, or rather *forces*, ranging from "Matter" to "Mind".

produce, can serve as *Ahāra*, as Nourishment, for even the lowest, the Body-Group of him. But man, Five-grouped, needs his Nourishment on all five planes: *sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*—"*All living beings are dependent on Nourishment*"—and, in this sense, we may regard even a single thought as a *Satta*. Thus "Nourishment" is constantly needed, if the Kamma is to continue to find expression (*i.e.*, if the being is to go on living); and that on every plane or in every Group in which the being considered functions.

Thus do we win another vision, a new, sublimer outlook upon life; we see the vast whole of it as constantly engaged in carrying on, in the process of its very living, a ceaseless, overwhelming sacrifice—continually dying so that it may live anew. Looking at it from the illusory quasi-personal viewpoint, we see how life on every side is living, suffering, dying a hundred thousand deaths, *that we ourselves may live*, clearly enough in the instance of our

body-food, *Ahāra* to our Form-Group, but not less obvious, to the man with Insight, in the case of the higher Nourishments of the Four *Nāma-Khandhā* Groups. The life of each one of us means at this moment the living, suffering, dying, of other forms of life beyond all numbering; from the humble—and yet even there immensely complex—life of the seed, the plant whose death this day has added to our body-nourishment, to the builders of the highest thoughts and aspirations which constitute the nobler aspect of our life. Put in one way—though that is but a little part of all the deep, wide truth of it—these very thoughts that now are making just a little clearer for us the nature of our being—the Way to Peace that Understanding means—have involved, in the mere handing-down only of the words, the *Rupa* aspect of them, the living, suffering, dying of noble, holy men beyond all counting. Their study and their teaching

have built the Path, the Way or Bridge that has served to carry or convey the Teaching right from our Master's lips to our own ears and hearts this day. Thus seen, the All of Life appears no more—as when we look upon the outer surface of its animal development—a terrible and ruthless strife, a ceaseless battle of the strong against the weak and pitiful. We see, thus understanding the true meaning of this Doctrine of the Nourishments, all life as a conspiracy indeed, but as a conspiracy of love, of never-ending sacrifice and mutual help. What little of wisdom, hope, strength; what little of aught that is great and noble in our characters, shines in our hearts, our lives this day, is the fruit and outcome of suffering lives beyond all thinking. Life's past has been, its agony endured, that *we* might live, and peradventure, later come to understand—to find the Peace whereunto, through this æonian sacrifice, all life is slowly wending, growing

a little nearer with each sacrifice of life. So is Life One.

Such is the threefold nature or character of life: *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, *Anatta*, Ever-changing, Fraught with Suffering, and of Self-hood Void. Great and terrible to learn it is—but true, alas! how true. A Truth so deep that could our minds but grasp the whole of it, then, where erst our petty, finite minds were limiting and determining the Life, at that same point of Time and Space and Consciousness were none of these—were but Infinitude, Infinite Understanding and Compassion, Nibbana's sure, inalienable Peace.

Anicca, *Dukkha*, *Anatta*: and, now as I speak the words, hundreds and thousands of our fellows, here and in every Buddhist land, are also reciting them, are also endeavoring, were it but a little, to win the Insight of their meaning, the Vision of their Truth which means attainment of Peace. All that is

round us teaches them: the flowers, the incense, and the lights, all swiftly evanescent things, we offer at our Master's shrine in memory of His Love and Wisdom; the deaths of those we loved; the long-drawn failure of our earlier hopes; and life itself is whispering their message in our hearts unceasingly—Changeful, Compact of Suffering, of Self-hood Void!

Great, wonderful, æonian Mystery of Life, forthstreaming from the utter gloom of Nescience; seeking the Light Beyond through Pain, through Sacrifice, through age-long giving of the hard-won individual-seeming life! Blinded by Nescience, by Craving Thirst and Hate and Self-delusion, its witless creatures—nay, even also Man, whose greater reason should make him wiser—strive, mad with torture, one against the other; life fighting against life—because it does not understand! How great it is, that, born from such Darkness, one still can burn so after Light! Born

in life's battle, one still can strive so for the Peace Beyond! Born to Suffering, one still can live in hopes of Sorrow's End! How pitiable, in its ceaseless agony; how hopeful, in its endless sacrifice! Surely a fact so holy and so great, so suffering and so weak, so not-understanding and so all-enduring—surely it must attain its End at last, find Life's Beyond, wherein is its Fruition, the Peace wherein these manifold conditionings are finished; where neither Pain, nor Craving Thirst or Hatred or Delusion, can enter in again for evermore!

And for the aim, the meaning of this Teaching of the Three Signata, the application of this Truth to this immediate life we live? That, too, grows clear to us as we come to understand. Since we have seen how all in life is *ever-changing*, let us, seizing right now upon the priceless moment ere it for ever flies, cast from our hearts the Craving Thirst for these evanescent phantasms of the world's Desires.

Understanding how all of it is *doomed to Sorrow*—wrought of the very warp and woof of Pain and Suffering and Despair—let the divine emotion of Compassion that wakes in us at the thought of it kill out all Hatred from our hearts and ways. Seeing, so far as our small power permits us, how *Life is One*, ceaselessly dying, that new life in us, in all, may live and grow a little nearer to the Peace, let us live no more for self's fell phantasy, but for the All that seeks a Goal so great; let us live so that the All, the One, may be the nobler and the greater for our life. Or, summing up all in but two sentences, let us apply to our own lives the last great message of the All-Wise, All-Loving Master—those words that you have so wisely taken for your motto, as your guide in life: *Aniccā saṅkhārā; appamādena sampādetha*—"*Transient are all the elements of being: wherefore through earnestness seek Liberation!*"

RIGHT UNDERSTANDING

When first the King of Truth, the Exalted Lord whose humble followers we strive to be, fresh from the victory over self that He had won beneath the Bodhi Tree for the blessing of the world, spoke in the hearing of mankind that message of Hope Attainable which for so long the great and wise had sought in vain, it was in terms of the Four Aryan or Noble Truths. In these He declared the essence of that Doctrine which—since that greatest day of all the days in the history of human thought—has wrought so greatly for the peace and progress of our kind. He spoke—as then, in the Deer-garden by Benares Town—to those five erstwhile disciples who had tended Him during His long essay of the value of asceticism, those five who had deserted

Him when He had found the futility of all such practice, and who now by long association with Him had come to understand to the full the value He attached to every single term and formula He used. Thus it was unnecessary that He should then, in that first Utterance of the Law, do more than concisely sum together the very essence of the Dhamma for one at least of them to comprehend to the full the meaning and the utter value of the Insight into life that He had won. What memories, and what associations, must each single word He used have had for those five men, privileged as they had been to follow, almost from the beginning of His spiritual progress, the workings of that Master-mind of all humanity! For they had been accustomed to enter with his guidance, and to pass with Him through realm beyond realm of spiritual attainment even to that ultimate level of cosmic consciousness in which, till His great achievement, consisted the

highest wisdom, the greatest attainment known to man! Little indeed can we wonder that one of them, Kondañña, as he heard that so compendious enunciation of the mystery of being, caught at The Master's meaning and saw, through the rending Veil of Nescience, the Light, the utter Peace Beyond. As we have heard the Sutta tell us, "in him also arose the Vision of the Truth, the clear and spotless Insight of the Law," whereat The Master, seeing and rejoicing, announced: "Thou verily hast seen It, O Kondañña"—so that Kondañña of the Five, was known as "Kondañña who perceived It," from that day forth.

But rare indeed, even amidst millions of millions of lives, is the Insight of a Kondañña, who, at the first hearing of it thus succinctly stated, could win that perfect Vision of the highest Truth; insight so clear, or privilege so blessed, comes but as guerdon and fruitage of many a truth-seeking holy life.

We whom the world calls Buddhists often indeed have heard, often have pondered deeply on that message of The Master, on that formula of the Aryan Truths the Greatest of the Aryans told for the saving of mankind. Yet not for us arises Truth's clear Vision, redolent of the Peace that reigns in the Beyond of Life, seeing that still *Avijja*, Nescience, rules in our hearts and minds; blinding us still to Truth's great glory, hiding us still from its all-liberating light. The *wording* of the Dhamma, that, soothly, have we heard; the incomparable surety of those Four Aryan Truths our minds have seen and ascertained in all our intercourse with life. Still, as we ponder on their meaning, deep after deep of new and surer Truth opens before the searching of our minds; yet far off and unattained lies their more inward meaning; and still we look, as to a goal distant by many a weary life, to the day when at last *full* Vision of the Truth shall open for us, when,

like Kondañña, we shall see, and understand.

For this is just the essence of our Buddhism—that there exists beyond and apart from all our clearest comprehension, a new, deeper and surer mode of comprehension than any we as yet have known. That utter Wisdom, that clear heart's Vision of the Truth, which, dawning in a man's life, changes for that one all his natal Nescience into perfect Understanding; which makes of one little-knowing as ourselves an Arahan, all-comprehending and all-holy—that fashion of knowing is named in our sacred language *Añña*, Insight, or *Pañña*, Wisdom. That it is—and not the sort of intellection whereby we grasp the purport of one of Euclid's problems—which The Master spoke of when He taught us: "It is by not-knowing and not-understanding that we have come to live so many pain-filled lives." Whoso, of all men greatest and most fortunate, can win to

that Vision of the Truth, that new great Wisdom, that lucid Insight far beyond our intellection, wins with it Liberation from the bondage of Kamma. Free from the clinging fetters of Self-delusion, of Craving, and of Hate, he knows that for him the weary cycle of transmigration is ended and he enters, even then and there, into Nibbāna's never-ending Peace.

This, then, is Sammādiṭṭhi, in its fullest and highest sense; nothing less than the very attainment of Arahanship, the very fulfilment of the purpose of all conscious life in the dawning of a state beyond all consciousness. Just as the seed must perish as a seed ere it can grow to the fuller, more resplendent life of shoot and stem and bloom, so must the bundle of life-elements (*Saṅkhārā*) that we call the self perish before the Goal of Life can be attained. And, just as the first condition of the seed-growth is the darkness and the

confining contact of the moist warm earth wherein it germinates to newer life, so is *Avijja*, Nescience, Ignorance, the limitation of the self-hood with its Craving and its Passion, the prime necessity of all we know as life. But light and the free wide spaciousness of air, not darkness and restriction, is the need of the plant which blossoms from the seed's decay; and so, The Master taught us, a new state, a State of Light whereinto Nescience no longer enters, wherein the confines of the self no more are seen, is the characteristic of that state of sainthood, that Goal of Arhanship to which we all aspire.

To this full rendering of Sammādiṭṭhi we may give expression by terming it, in English, *Fullest Insight.* But in Buddhist technology Sammādiṭṭhi is often used with narrower meanings, the narrowest of which is the mere intellectual process of accepting, of regarding as true, the fundamental formula of the Buddhist

religion, namely, the Four Noble Truths. It is thus defined in the *Saccavibhaṅga*, as being the understanding of Sorrow, of Sorrow's Cause, of Sorrow's Ceasing, and of the Path that conducts thereto. It is in this restricted sense only that we are ourselves immediately concerned with it; for here it may truly be regarded as being the *commencement* of the Path; whilst in its deeper meaning, as "Fullest Insight," it stands at the *end* of the Path, and is, indeed, the means whereby alone that Goal may be attained.

Here, before going further, it may be as well to correct one not uncommon error as regards the *Aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*, the Eightfold Path. It has not uncommonly been represented, by writers on Buddhism, that the Eight Members of the Path—Right Understanding, Aspiration, Speech, Action, and so forth—stand for *consecutive stages* in the Path of spiritual progress. There is, indeed, one sense in which

such a classification in respect of time throws light on the working of certain of the mental processes, as when we consider the arising of a simple idea, comparable to *Diṭṭhi*; its growth into a desire for action, comparable to *Sankappa*; the crystallisation of this mere desire into approximate action, in speech, *Vāca*; and its outcome in that action as *Kammanta*. In this series, we *do* in fact see something very similar to the first four Members of the Path occurring consecutively in point of time; but where the Noble Eightfold Path is spoken of in Buddhist technology, the Eight Members are to be regarded as *all* of them essential elements of that Path—just as the banks, the roadway, the road-metal, the footway, the avenue of trees, and so forth, may *all* be regarded, not as consecutive, but as integral elements of the road during its whole length. There is indeed, as pointed out by Buddhaghosa, a certain element of consecutiveness about the

eight elements of the Path—just as we might find, in respect of the road we have taken as our analogy, that at one part of the road the banks, at another the avenue of trees, were the most prominent feature of that road. But in that order, which we may term the Order of Attainment, to distinguish it from the Order of Exposition, in which latter we all know it, in that order of attainment the classification is in respect of *Kāya*, *Vāca* and *Citta*: Body, Speech and Thought; and in it, therefore, Sammādiṭṭhi, as falling under the head of Citta, comes last, not first, and thus carries in that connection the meaning of Fullest Insight which has been considered above. In general, however, the Eightfold Path is to be considered not as consisting of eight successive steps or stages, *but as a rule of conduct eightfold in character*, wherein *all* the eight *Aṅgas* or Elements are severally essential. Each of these Eight Members has its minor, middle, and major

aspects; the position of a given being in respect of *consecutive* attainment in progress of time, being measured by which of these three divisions of the several Members he has attained.

Where, then, in our Buddhist studies, we desire clearly to define the path of progress towards Nibbāna in respect of progress through time, or through consecutive *stages*, it is best to turn, not to the Eightfold, but to the Fourfold Path. The four elements of this latter *are* in fact consecutive; first the attainment of the stage of Sotapatti, then that of Sakadagami, then Anagami, and finally that of Arahattam itself. In this *resumé* of the progress of a being—from Life, the ocean of Saṁsāra or of the cycle of Transmigration wherein we all exist, to that Beyond of Life which we Buddhists term Nibbāna—we see very clearly the distinction between two of the different usages of the word Sammādiṭṭhi.

That Fourfold Path, as you will remember, is classified in respect of the mental Fetters or Bondages which have been overcome. Before a being can enter on the first of those Four Stages, he must have overcome the first three out of the Ten Bondages of the mind. First amongst those three comes *Sakāyadiṭṭhi*, the belief or opinion that there exists within us any sort of permanent self or soul, whether great or small, mean or exalted, gross or subtle. When a thinking being has broken through that Bondage (it is like the little stem and root-fibre that first pierces through the hard triple cuticle of the germinating seed), and, together with it, has freed himself from *Vicikiccha* (Dubiety or the hesitance between two courses of action, the doubt as to whether one's conception of the Dhamma is correct), and *Sīlabbat-paramāsā* (the belief in the efficacy of rites and rituals and spells and prayers to effect any real change within his

being), then he has won to the first of the Four Stages; he has become *Sotapatti*, "He who has entered on the Stream"—that stream in the ocean of Saṁsāra which sets fair towards Nibbāna's distant shore. Here is implied another usage of our Sammādiṭṭhi; one standing, as it were, midway between the mere intellectual acceptance of the Four Noble Truths and that widest meaning of the term which we have designated Fullest Insight. For the breaking of this Bondage of self-delusion means far more than the mere holding of the *opinion* that "there is no self". It means to see, to *know* that as the Very Truth—and so to *live* it, for he only truly lives, who knows.

Standing although it does at the very beginning of the Path, this middle mode of Sammādiṭṭhi implies a very great advance in comprehension of the truth about life. It is said in our Scriptures that whoso has entered

on the Stream, and in this middle sense is Sammādiṭṭhi, has before him at the most not more than seven lives; it may be less, but that is the utmost possible. So we see that in reality, the gaining of even thus much of this Right Understanding is a very great achievement—one which few indeed now living have attained to—a position which can be won only as the outcome of the fruit of many lives of earnest searching after Truth.

Thus we have before us these Three Modes or meanings of Sammādiṭṭhi. First, the mere intellectual appreciation of the truth of the fundamental teaching of the Dhamma—an appreciation which, I hope, we all have long since attained to. In Ceylon (where Māgadhi, the *Mūla-bhāsa* or sacred language of Buddhism, is still a spoken language amongst the learned and the Monks), if you ask a learned Monk of what religion is such-and-such a Buddhist, he will reply, not

Buddhāgama—"of the Buddhist Religion"—but "Sammādiṭṭhi"—using this, the narrowest mode or meaning of the term. In English, indeed, we, speaking of our religion, or spoken of by others, term ourselves, or are termed, *Buddhists*; but, convenient as it is, the term is not correct. We are, or should be *Sammādiṭṭhi*, having Right Understanding of the fundamental facts about life; we cannot truly claim to be Buddhists, save as a mere measure of convenience, for the sake of ready comprehension of our religious principles; for that term, if we trace it to its root meaning, would imply the claim of full enlightenment, seeing that the root is *Bodh*, to be Awakened, Illuminated, Wise. Even if we take the word Buddhist to imply a follower of the religious teaching peculiar to The Buddha, it still involves a certain amount of misconception; for in fact much of what the world calls Buddhist doctrine was well-known in India long before

The Buddha's day and is thus in no true sense the special Teaching of The Buddha. To one who is Sammādiṭṭhi, *all* that pertains to the deeper Truths about life, whether first enunciated by The Buddha or no, is part of his religion; and we may take this *intellectual assent to Truth* as being the determining factor in this, the Minor Mode of usage of "Sammādiṭṭhi". *Right Understanding*, right appreciation of the Truth, is this mode of Sammādiṭṭhi; and this we trust all have now attained.

Second comes the Middle Mode; that usage of the term which, together with the breaking of the Bondages of Doubt and Ritual-reliance, involves the "Entering on the Stream," that great spiritual attainment which constitutes the First Stage upon the Fourfold Path. And, yet beyond that, great though to our eyes such attainment be, far yet beyond that lies the Major Mode. Therein Sammādiṭṭhi means the final destruction of *Avijja*, of Nescience, of

Not-understanding; the attainment of the position of the Saint, the Arahan; the winning in the highest degree of that Fullest Insight or Highest Wisdom which, as has been said, lies far beyond any mode of mental functioning of which we now are cognisant. Between the mere acceptance of Right Views concerning life, and that supreme Attainment of the Arahan, lies the whole mass of Buddhist Teaching; also, the whole long Path of patient culture, of slow growth, of ever-dawning horizons of wisdom—extending, it may be, over many a following life—which leads from all life's turmoil to the Peace. It is the hope of every Buddhist that, not only he, but in the end *all* living creatures, will one day travel to the glorious Goal. Looking thus on the Path as extended between the two terminal Modes of Sammādiṭṭhi—*Right Understanding* at one end of it and *Fullest Insight* at the other—and placing, as we may

legitimately place, our own mental attitude as somewhere on that line between the minor and the median mode, nearer to the former as our Buddhism is more of a lip-service and less of a heart-service, two most important facts at once appear. First, the true spiritual progress, the best use, if our Buddhism be true, that we can make of our life, lies only in *the passing from our present position to one yet nearer to the Middle Mode.* Secondly, since the same fundamental element of Sammādiṭṭhi is found at both ends of the Path, *the dimension in which that Path is extended*, its direction, as it were, in the space of consciousness, *lies in what we may term the attainment of a series of ever-deepening Modes of Truth*, the several points on our line, each serially giving place to that beyond it. To make any use at all of our Buddhism, and, if we take it rightly, there is naught else in all the Universe so essentially useful, we have to discover *in what direction in*

our lives lies that line of ever-deepening Truth; and, having found it, to walk therein to the best of our ability; for that, surely, is the Holy Path itself, and save through its ever-deepening modes of seeing Truth, there is never freedom to be won from all the sorrow and the change of life.

Let us try to ascertain what we mean when thus we speak of ever-deepening Modes of Truth, and to realise what fashion of falsehood it is that we must needs avoid that we may rightly conceive of this our Right Understanding. Let us at first consider what sort of Understanding is that which is common to all thinking beings, and which on that very ground is too component of Nescience to be of real service to the aspirant after Truth.

Looking on the world presented to him by his senses, one fact predominates over all others in the mind of the ordinary man: the fact that there exists an essential difference

between that which, for him, is *self—his* thoughts, words, actions—and all the rest of life, the whole great Universe, which lies beyond, in the region of the *not-self*. That view, that fact ever so apparent to the unconverted mind, is the first Wrong View; the first great *Micchādiṭṭhi* which the All-Wisdom of our Master has taught us to avoid. But the ordinary man, taught only by his natal Nescience, by *Avijja*, sees in that illusory distinction between self and the not-self the fundamental fact of life; and from it, as from any start made in the wrong direction, all the Wrong Views of life depend. It needed the wisdom of a Copernicus to overcome, for the mass of civilised humanity, the delusion that the sun goes daily round the earth; and the opponents of Copernican Astronomy objected that it was the common daily testimony of the sense of sight of every being that it *did* so move. So did it need

the Wisdom of The Buddha to overcome for us, His followers, that deepest delusion of the central self-hood; and just so, also, is still the cry of the opponents of His Teaching, that the daily momentary testimony of our own minds declares this self-hood as the central fact of life.

So starting wrongly, the world's philosophies, of necessity, go further and further from the Truth they seek. Finding this Self-hood as the central fact of life, they deduce, from the phenomena about them, the existence of other selves besides their own. The savage, seeing the motion of sun and moon and star and stream and all the manifold phenomena of being, hearing the multitudinous sounds of Nature, attributes to each and all of them a separate self, a god or spirit using each and all just as—he fancies from his wrong understanding about life—*he* uses his various organs of motion and of speech. And when, later on

in the course of evolution, the savage comes to the point where families coalesce into tribes and clans, and these into nations, ruled over by one sovereign, so in his mind, grows the religious idea. The gods of star and earth and forest slowly take the names of servient angels, with one Great Self their Ruler, the Soul or Self of Space, wherein all these lesser beings have their dwelling-place. So does the religious consciousness of man, with great periods of time, pass from polytheism to monotheism or to pantheism; till, passed out of savagery, man grows to mental adolescence; by which time we generally find his monotheism or his pantheism well established, even as now they are in many directions in the western world.

Another very vital factor in the moulding of the religious consciousness of mankind (for the origin of religion is immensely complex, by no means taking its birth from one set of facts or theories alone) added its record also to the

common testimony of all mankind's experience as to the existence of the Self. It is the factor of Religious Experience, of the partial recollection, by saint and seer, of the manifold states of consciousness that exist beyond that realm of waking life wherein we normally act and live. More clear-seeing, indeed, in the greater light of consciousness to which they in their several Attainments had achieved, the seers of all times (at least such of their number as attained to the higher *Jhanas*, the states of consciousness pertaining to the Formless Worlds) announced the fact that, with progression upwards, element after element of the *lower* self was cast aside, till in the ultimate of consciousness they saw, no longer the manifold self-hoods of our experience, but *One Self*—one highest Self alone. This Self they, with minds already cast in the theistic mode by reason of the religious teaching of their nation, identified with the Supreme Being who had been

hypothesised as having made or emanated all this universal life. Thus, rightly casting out in the light of their superior experience, the petty self of man, they yet adhered to a still greater, because subtler, if far deeper-lying delusion. The conception grew of an ultimate, enduring, blissful *higher* Self-hood, wherefrom all life has consciously, intentionally been emanated; wherein whoso will rightly train his mind may merge his lesser self-hood, as the drop mixes with the wide ocean's wave.

Growing side by side with this rich crop of wrong opinions, sprang up likewise, intimately connected with it, another group of misconceptions as to the facts of life, a group which, in its totality, we may conveniently term the Theory of the Joy of Life. This theory also had many a different factor in its being; chief amongst these being the circumstance of human mental immaturity; the fact that all mankind was passing, whilst it

upsprang, through the childhood of humanity. Nay, it is even now, and even amongst the most advanced units of the most civilised of nations, only just passing from that epoch into the period of mental adolescence; and the sense of the joy of life is perhaps the acutest sentiment of child-life, the characteristic of the undeveloped, the immature consciousness of the little child. Cast back your own minds to the days of your early childhood, and if the memory has not altogether faded, you will see how true this is, you will remember how wonderful and fair and noble and good did all existence seem; how joy seemed the reality, and pain and sorrow only a passing, if dreaded, shadow to its glorious light. You will recall the vivid sense of wonder and of pleasure that came with each new phenomenon of life; how even some newly seen insect might arouse a perfect ecstasy of wonder; how every hour, nay every moment of the waking life seemed dear and

pleasant—so that even when tired out, you hated the very thought of sleeping, since that would mean the deprivation of some few hours of blissful conscious life. That is the characteristic of the infant consciousness, that sense of joy in life; and in this, as in so many ways, our own experience as children but epitomised the common daily condition of human consciousness in its early days. For such is the peculiarity of our growth, that the human individual, in the process of only a few years of infancy and childhood, epitomises in his life and thought the bygone history of the whole human race whose experience he inherits. Watch the daily growth of a young child and you will see the truth of this, you will see the infant life telling the story of the development of all humanity, from the tree-dwelling anthropoid, scarcely yet a man, through the Stone Age down to the hunting, fighting, kingdom-organising age which, even

now, only the most advanced units of our kind have outgrown. The child-mind sees and hears, and finds deep-rooted joy in mere sight and hearing; but it does not, till grown out of childhood's age, *think of what it all must mean.* Due to this, and again to the reproduction of the history of savage man, is the child's callousness to pain sometimes so shocking. Wonderful and therefore pleasant in its eyes are the struggles of some tortured animal or insect; just because the sort of movements executed are new and strange, the sight of them gives pleasure; and so, with all but a small minority of quite exceptional children, we have to educate the young out of the savage instinct to kill and torture the lower forms of life.

This early joy in life, so characteristic of the young, the mentally immature and thoughtless, bulking so largely as it still does in human thought, came, of necessity, to affect profoundly

the development of religious thought; meaning by that term, as we have all along implied, man's way of looking at the deeper things of life, his attempts to propound an answer to the riddle of existence. Applying, as always (in the nescience-working of the mind), the conditionings of his own life to the greater life about him, man early came to hold the view that all in life was essentially *good*. The joy of life in his own heart he reflected on the world about him, and in particular did he attribute joy and graciousness and goodness to the Supreme Self whom he later came to conceive as having made the earth and sky. He himself, for the service of his daily needs, could fashion out of stone and wood and earth his implements of hunting, warring, cooking; and so again he came to think that all this Universe, so fair and good before his mental vision, must likewise have been fashioned by that great Being. Remembering his own delight in the accomplishment

of work well-done, the joy of the maker over some tool or structure well-adapted to its purpose, he could even conceive the Deity as resting from his labor of creation, as looking on the world that he had made, and saying that it all was " very good ".

Yet knowledge grows, and with its growth comes deeper insight and a truer appreciation of the real nature of the Universe about us and within. With that growth of mental stature, the conception of the Deity, this personification of the ultimate forces of our being, comes of necessity to take a less and less important place within the thoughts of men. They see with growing understanding how much of utterly useless suffering there is in life; they learn, if very slowly, that in truth there is in all life no *persona*, no self, whether the personal or the greater self; but only a continuum, a flux of being, a ceaseless movement of the restless tides of life.

Slow, indeed, is that coming to mental adolescence; even still, (by reason of the influence on our speech of that Wrong View of life) we say "I think" where rightly we should say "It thinks". The Indian of The Buddha's time said "The God rains" where we should say "It rains". We have indeed advanced to the intransitive mood in this respect; but how long will the self persist in our speech in respect of human actions? With this personalisation of life's phenomena, indissolubly connected with it, springing from the same source, sad Nescience, rises that other Theory of the Joy of Life; ideas so plausibly and so naturally associated in the lines of that English poet who exclaims: "God's in his heaven: All's well with the world."

Such are the theories of life termed by the Buddha *Micchādiṭṭhi*—Wrong Views, the sort of Not-understanding we must sheer avoid, if

ever we are to merit the title of Sammādiṭṭhi. First, is the Theory of the Self, the conception that life is enselfed, that there is, within or behind it, an unchanging vital *persona*, whether regarded as ultimately one or many. Secondly, is the Theory of the Joy of Life, the view that life is in its fundamental nature blissful, good to live for the sake of its mere pleasure; and that, by any means whatever, we may realise therein, not the well-known Karmic sequence of the craving for pleasure bringing ultimately Pain; but a never-ending succession of pleasurable states of consciousness, a permanent Happiness resulting from the continued gratification of the desire for experience, for life.

These are the two great root-conceptions, springing from *Avijja*, from Nescience, Ignorance, the Not-understanding of the real nature of life, the rejection of which constitutes the basis of Sammādiṭṭhi in its Minor Mode. Here, before going further, we may well

pause to consider *why* these mere theories about life should constitute, from the Buddhist point of view, so serious a danger to the well-being of humanity; and so grave an obstacle that the very first step on the Path cannot be taken till they have been for ever set aside. Both of them have their roots in the deepest places of the human heart. It is fair and sweet and pleasant to a man to think that he—the *real* "he," as the Attāvādin would put it—is immortal, changeless, sure (if he but live aright) of inheriting a blissful and an eternal life; to conceive of all this world as being made and guided by a Great Person, infinitely powerful and beneficent, willing and able to help; and to look on life as in its essence blissful, pleasant, good to live. All this being so, why make the rejection of these theories the very test of the Buddhist orthodoxy—if we may use the term; or how does it happen that, in a religion so essentially practical as

Buddhism, the mere intellectual acceptance or rejection of certain theories should hold so prominent a place?

The answer to that question is—to one who not yet is Sammādiṭṭhi—the most terrible in all the world; it is an answer which, if it stood alone, would leave no hope or help or purpose in our life; it simply runs: They are *untrue*. To the Buddhist, Truth, the search after and the attainment to Truth, is his religion; and no man may hope to win to Truth who starts out in the wrong direction, who seeks for Truth whilst laying to his heart the false if fair solace that these Wrong Views present.

Untrue! And is Truth, then, worthy of so great a sacrifice that a man must needs give up convictions the most deep-rooted and consoling for its sake alone? Answers the Buddhist: Truth not alone denies the false, it goes far deeper, it affirms the True. So great and so inspiring in our lives, and, in its

deeper levels so profound, so far beyond our knowing is Truth, that it has been worthy of all sacrifice in all the worlds. Truth is greater than our hopes, nearer and yet dearer, could we but see and know it, than even our so cherished Theory of Self-hood, of the personal immortal life; wider is Truth than the heavens, vaster than the abyss of space; greater than aught we can compare it to—It is so free and high! Renunciation? Surely. Did ever the seed give being to the flower, shedding its perfume on the morning breeze, but first, below there in the darkness of the mire, *it gave its own life, that a greater life might come*? That is why Renunciation is the key-note of all Buddhist practice; and that is why the first step to be taken is the rejection utterly of all that is not utterly true.

For in Buddhism we are concerned with *facts*, not *theories*. If ever we may make our hearts, our minds, worthy receptacles of Truth's sweet

Amrita, we must first cleanse them of every trace of the bitter drugs Avijja has to give. Untrue, these two Wrong Views of life bear in themselves the seal and proof of their untruth; to see this fact, you have but to consider what has been the fruit of them in the history of humanity; to observe their outcome in the story of the creeds and faiths of all mankind. The destroying progress of Islam, the tortures of the Inquisition, the awful period of the Dark Ages when no man dared to breathe his free thoughts in the air of a mind-enslaved continent, and I know not, dare not think, what total sum of human agony and misdirected human energy and work—these are the fruits of those Wrong Views of life. It was because men dreamed they had immortal souls, destined to personal immortality of joy (on darker side of it, to immortality of torture: what charnel-minded imagination ever first put forth that thought of horror to taint the mental atmosphere of the

earth ?) and must placate the Supreme Self as they, poor grovelling nescience-darkened hearts, then wanted to placate their lords and kings—that they could kill, burn, torture even the greatest, noblest minds that ever their race gave birth to. For what cruelty, what torture mattered in the *now*, where eternity to-morrow weighed against it in the other scale? If one of the world's greatest epics of religion, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, could be marred, utterly marred it is by that deadly advice of Krishna to his disciple, who, on the point of plunging all his kith and kin into suicidal warfare, was very properly seized with pity-born compunction, but ordered, in the name of the Soul-Theory, to go on and kill, seeing that truly the Self was spiritual, and could not be destroyed. If such outcomes of the Atta-theory as all these could make a Shelley rightly cry: "The name of God hath fenced about all crimes with holiness," can we not see, not looking

further, that Truth is absent from all views of life, where such sad fruits can follow the acceptance of those views?

Why is this? How is it that these twin ideas have so imbruted man (ah, pity of it, in the name of all that should be holiest and best!) as to have brought more misery and bloodshed on the earth than any other single cause of human folly and misdeed? As our Master taught us, just because they spring from Nescience, from men's untrained Desire; because they are but *theories* —only ways of seeing things, views, *diṭṭhis*, things having no foundation in Truth or Fact. *There* comes the whole solution of the problem; there comes the point in the supreme importance of *Sammādiṭṭhi*—Right Understanding of the facts of life. Over *facts*, whoever fought or hated or inflicted suffering on life? No man of all the myriads that have ever lived. But over *views*, mere theories, things having no foundation save in the cobwebs of some pent-up

Nescience-darkened human mind, over mere theories, such as no man could ever tell the truth of (were truth not all too holy a word to be employed in such connection), over mere *views* men always have quarrelled and ever will, until at last such follies are for ever set aside; and no man shall live so ignorant as to say: "*I* hold such-and-such a theory, have worked it out, adopted it as *mine*; being my view, I am ready to fight for it against the world at large."

Not that in the *past* alone have these Wrong Views of life wrought damage to human progress; not that now we have so far progressed that their power for ill-doing has passed away from the causes of life's unceasing suffering on earth. Even to-day, in the name of those twin theories, inconceivable agony is being inflicted upon life. Even to-day a hundred thousand altars cast the ill savor of their sacrifices on the air. Follies, you

say, committed by barbarians, who, seeking more of joy in this world or the next, seek to placate their imaginary gods enselved. So be it. Ignorance it is; yet not worse evil than is daily happening in western lands. If, as is happily the case, no more the cries of human victims, burnt living in the market-places of our towns in the name of those two Modes of Nescience, prove their untruth and potency for evil in the hearts of men, still, under other names and forms, are they wreaking untold woe on all mankind. To the Self-Theory, as manifested under the form of so-called patriotism, is due the fact that so large a proportion of the manhood of the modern nations, drawn from useful service to mankind in field or factory, is wasted—worse than wasted—in the study and practice of warfare; which, in plain English, is the study and practice of the most efficient method of achieving on a wholesale scale the most terrible of all

human crimes—murder. To the same manifestation of Self-delusion is due the fact that so large a proportion of the wealth and resources of the western nations is wasted on this same folly of armaments. Only because men will cherish the Self-Theory, they will not understand that we all—English, Germans, French and so forth alike—are human beings, fellow-creatures, brothers; members of the one great fraternity of conscious, suffering, living beings, they would not war—like wolves or savages—the one upon the other, *did but they understand.* It is the Wrong View: "*I* am English; glorious English nationality is *mine*, so it behoves me to fight against persons who have another sort of Self-Theory, and say: 'No, but a Teuton *I*.'" It is that Wrong View which now makes necessary that the bulk of the resources of every branch of the West-Aryan race is wasted on armaments of war—wasted, when so much might, in the present state of our

knowledge, be achieved by man, were that great wealth to be expended in combating, not only physical disease, but also those far more fatal mental sicknesses, to which so much of western misery is due.

To the Wrong View of the Joy of Life, also, how much of our occidental suffering may be assigned! Believing that in life joy may somehow be gained, we add and add, instead of seeking to diminish, the number of the things we say we "need". Climatic conditions of necessity add to the number of the actual necessities of life as compared with the simple needs of warmer climates. But beyond those actual necessities, beyond the needs of science and of art and literature (civilising influences all, and so not less true "needs" of the mind than food-stuffs are of the body)—beyond our true needs, how much our modern civilisation now produces just by reason of this false belief in the Joy of Life; the mere theory

that by much possession we may come to happiness! To produce that vast array of things *really* useless, thousands and hundreds of thousands of women, men, and even little children must live squalid and hopeless lives, ever in fear of some catastrophe of commerce that may deprive them of food, warmth, and shelter; and how many, alas, of these producers of the *unnecessaries* of life are, even now, short of due food, lacking the barest of human necessities?

Thus, looking even into the present-day conditions of our human existence, do we see how deadly, how full of poison for humanity, are the two Views or Theories of Life which, warned by our Master, we who are Sammā-diṭṭhi have come to reject as false and full of danger and of fear. Heart's poisons in very truth are they, poisoning the very innermost lives of men; and yet, in one after another of their endless manifestations—whether as

religious dogmas, as political or national conceptions, as militarism, or as commercialism—the minds of men still seize upon them with avidity, still give them great, high-sounding and heart-stirring names. Just so, in the old Buddhist simile, a man, afflicted with a grievous open sore, from mere fear of thinking of it, covers it up from sight with piled-up layer after layer of gold-leaf, since so it *seems* no longer hideous; yet ah, the corruption that festers beneath it all! Great names; high-sounding words; wonderful theories of things that no man knows—the how and why of life; such now, as ever, is the gold-leaf this poor suffering humanity applies to its festering wounds! How long, how sorrow-laden must it yet be, ere we shall tear it all away, this glittering gilding of mere empty and high-sounding terms, and dare to look on life as in very truth it is; or have the wit to turn to that All-greatest of the Heart's Physicians, who, with Truth's

healing salve, stands ever ready to allay the growing poison and the fever of our wound?

That salve, the healing, even with a bitter seeming balm, is *Sammādiṭṭhi*, Right Understanding of the facts of life, the comprehension of the Truth about existence—the pulling-off of the gold-leaf and examining and recognising the true sources of our pain. To dare to look on life as it really is: *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, *Anatta*; Transient, and Sorrow-laden, and Devoid of Self—*that* is the first step we must take. It means the casting-out of all the vain reliances and theories that ever the mind of man has spun; the setting-aside, since such conduce not to our urgent need of healing, of all such questionings as: How life came to be, or Whence it is. *Whither it shall go*—with that alone we really are concerned; for that, if we have Right Understanding, we may somewhat direct, since *we* are what we really know of life.

Speaking of the particular *religious* aspects of the two great Wrong Views, I have said that their casting-off seems at first sight a thing most cruel and most terrible; it is the plucking-off of the gold-leaf from the poisoned wound. Some few rash minds indeed have dared to do that (not knowing, alas for them, of the Physician and His salve!) and, seeing what lay beneath it all, these have come straight to yet another new Wrong View about it all. Seeing the suffering inseparable from all life—understanding the meaning of the fact, that, in the body's evolution, what is now for us sensation is the direct descendant of the *irritability*, the reaction to irritation, of the primordial protoplasm—these have come to formulate a new Wrong View of Life, and one which does not possess the merit even of *looking* beautiful, as the old gold-leaf method did. That view is now termed Pessimism; we may briefly put it thus. There is no Soul,

no God, but a new sort of eternal self-hood or principle called Matter alone exists. That Matter is itself insentient, but somehow, by mere chance, certain combinations of it occurred which were so unstable as to involve a constant molecular change; a taking-in of new molecules at one point, and a turning out of old ones on the other. By virtue of the action of environment on this primordial life-stuff, it presently developed into what now we are, living, conscious beings, destined to cease at death, and pass away as uselessly as first we came. In this view—one, happily, held now by but a few adherents—there is no Law in life, that is, no Law *of* Life as such, at all: our existence came by Chance; and one day, when the earth grows cold or hot enough, it will similarly perish. All life is thus regarded as not merely full of sorrow and of evil but as *without a purpose or a future.* Life, wonderful, ever-miraculous as to the thoughtful man it is, has,

in this view of it, no origin save Chance and the workings of the blind Laws of Nature; no hope save death, with all its suffering left unrewarded; no aim, no end, no purpose, and no brighter goal.

Few men ever will, we hope, come to hold that so terrible view of existence, least of all any Buddhist. But it is mentioned here to introduce a most important point in Buddhist Teaching, namely, that this Pessimism is, from the Buddhist standpoint, just as wrong as the optimistic and theistic theories which we have already discussed. For it is characteristic of that Teaching that it ever pursues the *Middle Way*, in this great question of the Good and Evil of existence as in all other matters. In the first Sermon of The Buddha, the importance of avoiding such extremes of view-point was emphasised by the terming of the Path the *Middle Way*. Preached, as that Sermon was, to Monks accustomed to regard self-torture as

the means of liberation from suffering, the essence of the religious life, the contrast was drawn between the life of self-torture and the life of self-indulgence; and the Middle Way, the way that leads to Truth, to Fullest Insight was announced to lie between these two extremes. But in our question of life's Good and Ill also, the same rule applies. While we must, if Sammādiṭṭhi, reject the theories of the Self and of the Joy of Life; we must likewise reject the *opposite* extreme of view—the theory I have given above as Pessimism. Life, then, as the Buddhist sees it, is indeed full of Suffering; but it may be so directed as to lead us to a Peace Beyond, a state far past our dim perceptions of its glory, wherein is Sorrow's End for evermore. Though—in our Right Understanding—there is no Supreme Self that made these worlds and by his will upholds and rules them, yet there *is* a Power that moves to righteousness and brings all beings

to the greater Light: the Power of Wisdom, of that high holy Insight which we have seen is Sammādiṭṭhi's Major Mode of use. Thus, as much as in the Theist's view of it, life has for the Buddhist both a Hope and, if you will, a Purpose. This Right View declares the existence of a Goal so great and high that we are forbidden even to call it Life, it is Beyond, and as it were a glory which this self we fancy now may grow to, to just the very extent to which it ceases to be component of that Self-delusion—just as the seed in perishing, and in perishing alone, gives being to the so-far-differently-conditioned flower.

Yet this great Hope in Buddhism—this Goal without which all life were purposeless, its long suffering useless and inexcusable—this ideal of the Peace Beyond All Life is no mere view or empty theory. We Buddhists hold that hope not, by any means, on faith or trust, such as must ever form the basis of

the Theist's hope. It is *deduced* by us from life's phenomena; attested in chief by the King of Truth, the Great Teacher who first in our history attained to it (though not the first, Buddhist tradition declares, who ever had attained before,) and by the testimony of the million Great Ones who, since He discovered the Way thereto, have walked in the Path that He declared. Lastly, if in far less degree, it is attested by our own experience, by the fact that we can see, to just the extent we strive to follow the Middle Way ourselves, the utter truth—the ever-deepening truth—of all that noble Aryan Teaching of Truth's King. Following it as best we can, we too find the Great Peace growing in our hearts; thus to us this ideal of Nibbāna is no mere view, but a reality ever deepening as our life grows nearer to the Truth, the Way of Peace that The Master taught and lived.

When, growing out of that period of mental childhood in which all life seems so fair and pleasant, men come to mental adolescence, as so many in the western world are doing at this day, then, with the passing of their immaturity, passes the keen sense of the joy of life, for knowledge grows as the mind of man grows. Man comes to see that, behind this so fair-seeming mask of life, lies Death; he understands that the very law of evolution is Suffering, and that the species which most can suffer best survives. No more can one, understanding the great and awful suffering involved in life, regard it as created by an omnipotent and all-loving Self-hood; no more can one who once has sought by clear analysis in his own heart for that imagined lesser self of man, conceive of *aught* within him as eternal, changeless or secure. Looking deeper and, if he be fortunate, aided by the Truth The Master left us, the adolescent man perceives how all there

is in life, as now we know it, is of necessity *Changeful*; he sees how the great sequences of the Law of Life, Kamma, make of *Suffering* an essential element of all component being; he sees that that which formerly he conceived of as his self, eternal, stable, is but a wave in life's great ocean. He sees it destined, not indeed, as in the Pessimist's thought, to utter annihilation after a little span of such sad sordid life as living creatures on our planet know, but to give place, at the end of all its long cycle of evolving Transmigration (wherein for no two following hours is it in totality *either* "the same" nor yet "another" being) to a State Beyond all thought and naming—the Peace, the Purpose, the Fruition of all Life.

Not one self-hood of our own, separate from the other selves of all the Universe, but a bundle of *Sankhārās*, of elements of the common life: that is the idea which is implied. Just as the elements of the body enter in our

food-stream, become for a little while integral portions of our being, and then, in the ceaseless flux of form, pass out on their further never-resting course of life—so, in this Buddhist view, do these Sankhārās come, dwell for a little in our minds, then pass out again; a never-ceasing flux of thought. Just as some elements of our corporeal frames are, as it were, nobler or of higher import to our life than others, and some, again, inimical to our welfare, so is it with the elements of thought. Here now to-day a whole group of the nobler of the elements of thought, first set in motion we know not when, but wrought to their present form in the Mind of the Great One whom we strive to follow—thoughts which have echoed down through life for five-and-twenty centuries—are passing once again through the medium of the spoken or the printed word, into your several minds. To-morrow—lit, peradventure, by some new illustration of their

meaning—they will be passing from your minds into yet others, and so on until life shall end at last in Peace. From this conception of the flux of thought follow many points of great importance. One is the need we have of constantly attending to the thought-food of our minds, just as we attend to the food-stuffs of our bodies; we must reject from our mental diet the ill thoughts, and definitely cultivate the assimilation of high and holy ones. Another, of yet greater moment, is the fact that, at long last, all conscious life is one ocean, whereof our several minds are now the waves; whose force is ever giving rise to further wavelets, waves not "another" and yet not "the same". It is the *flux* which passes on and, in its changing, yet in some sense endures; it is the totality of that Flowing on now, at this moment, in us, that we call "ourselves". Thus, rightly understanding, life becomes as One, which we can best help

onward as we ennoble each though-element in its passage through our minds; wherefore, from the Buddhist view-point, all reformation, all attempt to help on life, can best be effected by *first* reforming our immediate life-kingdom of the "self".

Now, finally, one thought remains to be considered. We have seen what are the views and theories which we must fain avoid, if we will make ourselves worthy of the title "Sammādiṭṭhi". We have seen how the Right View of Life, teaching as it does Life's Oneness, makes for Compassion, for endurance, for the ennobling of all our relations with life. No more, as in the View of Self-hood, looking on self and life as two different things, we have understood them *One*. We see, too, how we each may, humble though we be, yet help on life at large; and how only we can help life, by making this understanding of our oneness with it enter, in practice, into all our

daily ways as pity and as love. We see how this Right View of Life might change the world to paradise to-morrow; how all the bitter pain of life comes only from the following of the false, the selfish view. All this is but the *Minor* Mode of Sammādiṭṭhi, just the intellectual appreciation of the fundamental Buddhist Truths. What lies beyond? What must we do so as to enter upon that Fourfold Path of Attainment on whose first step stands, not this Minor, but Sammādiṭṭhi's *Middle* Mode? The answer is: Just *live* that Understanding. Let it be no mere vain theory—for still a theory it is, until it enters into practice in our own, our very lives. It means so to direct the course in life's great ocean of this our group of elements of life that, with each thought that passes from us, a little gain will come to life at large; it means to suppress, with constant watchfulness, the evil, selfish thoughts, and cultivate the nobler, self-renouncing

ones; to understand how Sorrow rules inalienable to life, and yet—because Beyond, Peace is ever reigning—how we may so restrain our ways that when we die all life will have become something the nobler and the nearer to the Peace because we lived and suffered, and just a little *knew*. All that, or, briefly, to *live* Right Understanding and not to make an empty *talk* of it; all that it is to come nearer to that deeper, Middle Mode of Truth about Right Understanding, the winning of which means the Entering of the Stream, the great ancient, holy Stream of deathless Light, which all the glorious Company of the Great and Wise follow; and which passing across life's ocean—brackish with the tears of its unending pain—breaks at last upon Life's Further Shore; wherein is Peace, greater beyond all naming than the life we erst have known.

THE CULTURE OF MIND

The religion of the Buddhas is, in the most eminent sense of the word, a practical philosophy. It is not a collection of dogmas which are to be accepted and believed with an unquestioning and unintelligent faith; but a series of statements and propositions which, in the first place, are to be intellectually grasped and comprehended; secondly, to be applied to every action of our daily lives, to be practised and lived, to the fullest extent of our powers. This fact of the essentially practical nature of our religion is again and again insisted upon in the Holy Books. Though one man should know by heart a thousand stanzas of the Law, and not practise it, he has not understood the Dhamma. That man who knows and *practises* one stanza of the Law, he has understood the

Dhamma, he is the true follower of The Buddha. It is the practice of the Dhamma that constitutes the true Buddhist, not the mere knowledge of its tenets; it is the carrying out of the Five Precepts, and not their repetition in the Pali tongue. It is the bringing home into our daily lives of the Great Laws of Love and Righteousness that marks a man as *Sammādiṭṭhi*, and not the mere appreciation of the truth of that Dhamma as a beautiful and poetic statement of Laws which are too hard to follow. This Dhamma has to be lived, to be acted up to, to be felt as the supreme ideal in our hearts, as the supreme motive of our lives; and he who does this to the best of his ability is the right follower of The Master; not he who calls himself "Buddhist," but whose life is empty of the love The Buddha taught.

Because betimes our lives are very painful, because to do right, to follow the Good

Law in all our ways is very difficult, therefore we should not despair of ever being able to walk in the way we have learned, and resign ourselves to living a life full only of worldly desires and ways. For has not The Master said: "Let no man think lightly of good, saying, 'it will not come nigh me'—for even by the falling of drops, the water-jar is filled. The wise man becomes full of Good, even if he gather it little by little"? He who does his best, he who strives, albeit failing, to follow what is good, to eschew what is evil, that man will grow daily the more powerful for his striving; and every wrong desire overcome, each loving and good impulse acted up to, will mightily increase our power to resist evil, will ever magnify our power of living the life that is right.

Now, the whole of this practice of Buddhism, the whole of the Good Law which we who call ourselves Buddhists should strive to follow,

has been summed up by the Tathāgata in one single stanza:

"*Avoiding the performance of evil actions, gaining merit by the performance of good acts, and the purification of all our thoughts: this is the Teaching of all the Buddhas.*"

We who call ourselves Buddhists have so to live that we may carry out the three rules here laid down. We all know what it is to avoid doing evil; we detail the acts that are ill each time we take *Pañca Sila.* The taking of life, the taking of what does not rightly belong to us, living a life of impurity, speaking what is not true or is cruel and unkind, and indulging in drugs and drinks that undermine the mental and moral faculties—these are the evil actions that we must avoid. Living in peace and love, returning good for evil, having reverence and patience and humility—these are some part of what we know for good. And so we can all understand,

we can all try to live up to, the first two clauses of this stanza, and endeavor to put them into practice in our daily lives. But the way to purify thought, the way to cultivate the thoughts that are good, to suppress and overcome the thoughts that are evil; the practices by which the mind is to be trained and cultivated—of these things less is known, they are less practised, and less understood.

The object of this paper is to set forth what is written in the books of these methods of cultivating and purifying the mind; to set forth how this third rule can be followed and lived up to; for in one way it is the most important of all, it really includes the other two rules, and is their crown and fruition. The avoidance of evil, the performance of good: these things will but increase the merit of our destinies, will lead but to new lives, happier, and so more full of temptation, than that we now enjoy. And after that merit,

thus gained, is spent and gone, the whirling of the great Wheel of Life will bring us again to evil and unhappy lives; for not by the mere storing of merit can freedom be attained, it is not by mere merit that we can come to the Great Peace. This merit-gaining is secondary in importance to the purification and culture of our thought; but it is essential, because only by the practice of *Sīla*, of Right Conduct, comes the power of Mental Concentration that makes us free.

In order that we may understand how this final and principal aim of our Buddhist faith is to be attained, before we can see why particular practices should thus purify the mind, it is necessary that we should first comprehend the nature of this mind itself—this thought that we seek to purify and to liberate.

In the marvellous system of psychology which has been declared to us by our Teacher,

the *Citta* or thought-stuff is shown to consist of innumerable elements which are called *Dhamma* or *Sankhāra*. If we translate *Dhamma* or *Sankhāra* as used in this context as "Tendencies," we will probably come nearest to the English meaning of the word. When a given act has been performed a number of times; when a given thought has arisen in our minds a number of times—there is a definite tendency to the repetition of that act, a definite tendency to the recurrence of that thought. Thus each mental Dhamma, each Sankhāra, tends constantly to produce its like, and be in turn reproduced; and so, at first sight it would seem as though there were no possibility of altering the total composition of one's Sankhāras, no possibility of suppressing the evil Dhammas, no possibility of augmenting the states that are good. But, whilst our Master has taught us of this tendency to reproduce, that is so characteristic of all mental states,

He has also shown us how this reproductive energy of the Sankhāras may itself be employed to the suppression of evil states, and to the culture of the states that are good. For if a man has many and powerful Sankhāras in his nature, which tend to make him angry or cruel, we are taught that he can definitely overcome those evil Sankhāras by the practice of mental concentration on Sankhāras of an opposite nature; in practice by devoting a definite time each day to meditating on thoughts of pity and of love. Thus he increases the Sankhāras in his mind that tend to make men loving and pitiful; and because "Hatred ceaseth not by hatred at any time, hatred ceaseth by Love alone," therefore do those evil Sankhāras of his nature, those tendencies to anger and to cruelty, disappear before the rise of new good tendencies of love and of pity, even as the darkness of the night fades in the glory of the dawn. Thus we see that one way—and

the best way—of overcoming bad Sankhāras, is the systematic cultivation, by dint of meditation, of such qualities as are opposed to the evil tendencies we desire to eliminate; and in the central and practical feature of the instance adduced, the practice of definite meditation or mental concentration upon the good Sankhāras, we have the key to the entire system of the Purification and Culture of the Mind, which constitutes the practical working basis of the Buddhist religion.

If we consider the action of a great and complex engine—such a machine as drives a steamship through the water—we shall see that there is, first and foremost, one central and all operating source of energy: in this case the steam which is generated in the boilers. This energy in itself is neither good nor bad—it is simply *Power*; and whether that power does the useful work of moving the ship, or the bad work of breaking loose and destroying and

spoiling the ship, and scalding men to death, and so on, all depends upon the correct and co-ordinated operation of all the various parts of that complex machinery. If the slide-valves of the great cylinders open a little too soon and so admit the steam before the proper time, much power will be lost in overcoming the resistance of the steam itself. If they remain open too long, the expansive force of the steam will be wasted, and so again power will be lost; and if they open too late, much of the momentum of the engine will be used up in moving uselessly the great mass of machinery. And so it is with every part of the engine. In every part the prime mover is that concentrated expansive energy of the steam; but that energy must be applied in each divers piece of mechanism in exactly the right way, at exactly the right time; otherwise the machine will not work at all, or much of the energy of the steam will

be wasted in overcoming its own opposing force.

So it is with this subtle machinery of the mind—a mechanism infinitely more complex, capable of far more power for good or for evil, than the most marvellous of man's mechanical achievements, than the most powerful engine ever made by human hands. One great engine, at its worst, exploding, may destroy a few hundred lives, at its best may carry a few thousand men, may promote trade and the comfort of some few hundred lives; but who can estimate the power of one human mind, whether for good or for evil? One such mind, the mind of a man like Napoleon, may bring about the tortured death of three million men, may wreck states and religions and dynasties, and cause untold misery and suffering. Another mind, employing the same manner of energy, but rightly using that energy for the benefit of others, may, like The Buddha, bring hope

into the hopeless lives of billions upon billions of human beings, may increase by a thousand-fold the pity and love of a third of humanity, may aid innumerable millions of beings to come to that peace for which we all crave—that Peace the way to which is so difficult to find.

But the energy which these two minds employed is one and the same. That energy lies hidden in every human brain, it is generated with every pulsation of every human heart, it is the prerogative of every being, and the sole mover in the world of men. There is no idea or thought, there is no deed, whether good or bad in this world accomplished, but that supreme energy, that steam-power of our mental mechanism is the mover and the cause. It is by the use of this energy that the child learns how to speak; it is by its power that Napoleon could bring sorrow into thousands of lives; it is by this power that The Buddha conquered

the hearts of one-third of the human race; it is by that force that so many have followed Him on the Way which He declared—the *Nibbana Magga*, the way to the Unutterable Peace. The name of that power is Mental Concentration; and there is nothing in this world, whether for good or for evil, but is wrought by its application. It weaves upon the loom of time the fabric of men's characters and destinies. Name and form twine twin-threads with which are blended in the quick-flying shuttles of that loom, men's good and evil thoughts and deeds; and the pattern of that fabric is the outcome of innumerable lives.

It is by the power of this *Samādhi* or Mental Concentration that the baby learns to walk; it is by its power that Newton weighed the suns and worlds. It is the steam-power of this human organism; and what it does to make us great or little, good or bad, is the result of

the way the mechanism of the mind, all these complex Sankhāras, apply and use that energy. If the Sankhāras act well together, if their varying functions are well co-ordinated, then that man has great power, either for good or for evil. When you see one of weak mind and will, you may be sure that the actions of his Sankhāras are working one against another; and so the central power, this power of Samādhi, is wasted in one part of the mind in overcoming its own energy in another.

If a skilful engineer, knowing well the functions of each separate part of an engine, were to have to deal with a machine whose parts did not work in unison, and which thus frittered away the energy supplied to it, he would take his engine part by part, adjusting here a valve and there an eccentric; he would observe the effect of his alterations with every subsequent movement of the whole engine, and so, little by little, would set all that machinery

to work together, till the engine was using to the full the energy supplied to it. And this is what we have to do with the mechanism of our minds—each one for himself. First, earnestly to investigate our component Sankhāras, to see wherein we are lacking, to see wherein our mental energy is well used and where it runs to waste; and then to keep adjusting, little by little, all these working parts of our mind-engine, till each is brought to work in the way that is desired, till the whole vast complex machinery of our being is all working to one end—the end for which we are working, the goal which now lies so far away, yet not so far, but that we may yet work for and attain it.

But how are we thus to adjust and to alter the Sankhāras of our natures? If a part of our mental machinery *will* use up our energy wrongly, *will* let our energy leak into wrong channels, how are we to cure it? Let us take another example from the world of mechanics.

There is a certain part of a locomotive which is called the slide-valve. It is a most important part, because its duty is to admit the steam to the working parts of the engine: and upon its accurate performance of this work the whole efficiency of the locomotive depends. The great difficulty with this slide-valve consists in the fact that its face must be perfectly, almost mathematically, smooth; and no machine has yet been devised that can cut this valve-face smooth enough. So, what they do is this: they make use of the very force of the steam itself, the very violent action of steam, to plane down that valve-face to the necessary smoothness. The valve, made as smooth as machinery can make it, is put in its place, and steam is admitted; so that the valve is made to work under very great pressure and very quickly for a time. As it races backwards and forwards, under this unusually heavy pressure of steam, the mere friction against the

port-face of the cylinder upon which it moves, suffices to wear down the little unevennesses that would otherwise have proved so fertile a source of leakage. So must we do with our minds. We must take our good and useful Sankhāras one by one; must put them under extra and unusual pressure by special mental concentration. By this means those good Sankhāras will be made ten times as efficient; there will be no more leakage of energy; and our mental mechanism will daily work more and more harmoniously and powerfully. From the moment that the Mental Reflex[1] is attained, the hindrances (*i.e.*, the action of opposing Sankhāras) are checked, the leakages (*Āsavas*, a word commonly translated corruptions, means, literally, leakages:—*i.e.*, leakages through wrong channels of the energy of the being) are assuaged, and the mind

[1] The Mental Reflex, or *Nimitta*, is the result of the practice of certain forms of Samādhi. For a detailed account, see *Visuddhi Magga*.

concentrates itself by the concentration of the neighborhood degree.[1]

Now let us see how these Sankhāras, these working parts of our mental mechanism, first come into being. Look at a child learning how to talk. The child hears a sound, and this sound the child learns to connect by association with a definite idea. By the power of its mental concentration, the child seizes on that sound by its imitative group of Sankhāras. It repeats that sound, and by another effort of concentration it impresses the idea of that sound on some cortical cell of its brain, where it remains as a faint Sankhāra, ready to be called up when required. Then, some time an occasion arises which recalls the idea that sound represents—the child has need to make that sound in order to get some desired object. It concentrates its mind with all its power on

[1] *Visuddhi Magga*, iv. There are two degrees of mental concentration—"Neighborhood-concentration" and "Attainment-concentration" respectively.

the memorising cortex of its brain, until that faint Sankhāra, that manner of mind-echo of the sound that lurks in the little brain-cell, is discovered, and, like a stretched string played upon by the wind, the cell yields up to the mind a faint repetition of the sound-idea which caused it. By another effort of concentration, now removed from the memorising area and shifted to the speaking centre in the brain, the child's vocal chords tighten in the particular way requisite to the production of that sound; the muscles of lips and throat and tongue perform the necessary movements; the breathing apparatus is controlled, so that just the right quantity of air passes over the vocal chords; and the child speaks: it repeats the word it had formerly learnt to associate with the object of its present desire. Such is the process of the formation of a Sankhāra. The more frequently that idea recurs to the child, the more often does it have to go through the

processes involved; the more often, in a word, has the mind of the child to perform mental concentration, or *Samādhi*, upon that particular series of mental and muscular movements, the more powerful does the set of Sankhāras involved become, till the child will recall the necessary sound-idea, will go through all those complex movements of the organs of speech, without any appreciable new effort of mental concentration. In effect, that chain of associations, that particular co-ordained functioning of memory and speech, will have established itself by virtue of the past mental concentrations, as a powerful Sankhāra in the being of the child, and that Sankhāra will tend to recur whenever the needs which led to the original Samādhi are present, so that the words will be reproduced automatically, and without fresh special effort.

Thus we see that Sankhāras arise from any act of mental concentration. The more

powerful, or the more often repeated, is the act of Samādhi, the more powerful the Sankhāras produced; thus a word in a new language, for instance, may become a Sankhāra, may be perfectly remembered without further effort, either by one very considerable effort of mental concentration, or by many repetitions of the word, with slight mental concentration.

The practical methods, then, for the culture and purification of the mind, according to the method indicated for us by our Master, are two: first, *Sammāsati*, which is the accurate reflection upon things in order to ascertain their nature—an investigation or analysis of the Dhammas of our own nature in this case; and, secondly, *Sammāsamādhi*, or the bringing to bear upon the mind of the powers of concentration, to the end that the good states, the good Dhammas may become powerful Sankhāras in our being. As to the bad states, they are to be regarded as mere leakages of the central power;

and the remedy for them, as for the leaky locomotive slide-valve, is the powerful practice upon the good states which are of an opposite nature. So we have first very accurately to analyse and observe the states that are present in us by the power of Sammāsati, and then practise concentration upon the good states, especially those that tend to overcome our particular failings. By mental concentration is meant an intentness of the thoughts, the thinking for a definite time of only one thought at a time. This will be found at first to be very difficult. You sit down to meditate on love, for instance; and in half a minute or so you find you are thinking about what someone said the day before yesterday. So it always is at first. The Buddha likened the mind of the man who was beginning this practice of Samādhi to a calf that had been used to running hither and thither in the fields without let or hindrance, and which has now been tied with a

rope to a post. The rope is the practice of meditation; the post is the particular subject selected for meditation. At first the calf tries to break loose, he runs hither and thither in every direction; but is always brought up sharp at a certain distance from the post, by the rope to which he is tied. For a long time, if he is a restless calf, this process goes on; but at last the calf becomes more calm, he sees the futility of struggling, and lies down by the side of the post. So it is with the mind. At first, subjected to this discipline of concentration, the mind tries to break away, it runs in this or that direction; and if it is an usually restless mind, it takes a long time to realise the uselessness of trying to break away. But always, having gone a certain distance from the post, having got a certain distance from the object selected for meditation, the fact that you have sat down with the definite object of meditating acts as the rope, and the mind

realises that the post was its object, and so comes back to it. When the mind, becoming concentrated and steady, at last lies down by the post, and no longer tries to break away from the object of meditation, then concentration is obtained.

But this takes a long time to attain, and very hard practice; and in order that we may make this, the most trying part of the practice, easier, various methods are suggested. One is, that we can avail ourselves of the action of certain Sankhāras themselves. You know how we get into *habits* of doing things, particularly habits of doing things at a definite time of day. Thus we get into the habit of waking up at a definite time of the morning, and we always tend to wake up at that same hour of the day. We get into a habit of eating our dinner at seven o'clock, and we do not feel hungry till about that time; and if we change the times of our meals, at

first we always feel hungry at seven, then, when we get no dinner, a little after seven that hunger vanishes, and we presently get used to the new state of things. In effect the practice of any act, the persistence of any given set of ideas, regularly occurring at a set time of the day, forms within us a very powerful tendency to the recurrence of those ideas, or to the practice of that act, at the same time every day.

Now we can make use of this time-habit of the mind to assist us in our practice of meditation. Choose a given time of day ; always practise in that same time, even if it is only for ten minutes, but always at exactly the same time of day. In a little while the mind will have established a habit in this respect, and you will find it much easier to concentrate the mind at your usual time than at any other. We should also consider the effect of our bodily actions on the mind. When we have just eaten a meal the major part of the spare energy in us

goes to assist in the work of digestion; so at those times the mind is sleepy and sluggish, and under these circumstances we cannot use all our energies to concentrate. So choose a time when the stomach is empty—of course the best time from this point of view is when we wake up in the morning. Another thing that you will find very upsetting to your concentration at first is sound, any sudden, unexpected sound particularly. So it is best to choose your time when people are not moving about, when there is as little noise as possible. Here again the early morning is indicated, or else late at night, and, generally speaking, you will find it easiest to concentrate either just after rising, or else at night, just before going to sleep.

Another thing very much affects these Sankhāras, and that is *place*. If you think a little, you will see how tremendously place affects the mind. The merchant's mind may be full of trouble; but no sooner does he get

to his office or place of business, than his trouble goes, and he is all alert—a keen, capable business man. The doctor may be utterly tired out, and half asleep when he is called up at night to attend an urgent case; but no sooner is he come to his place, the place where he is wont to exercise his profession, the bed-side of his patient, than the powerful associations of the place overcome his weariness and mental torpor, and he is very wide awake—all his faculties on the alert, his mind working to the full limits demanded by his very difficult profession. So it is in all things: the merchant at his desk, the captain on the bridge of his ship, the engineer in his engine-room, the chemist in his laboratory—the effect of *place* upon the mind is always to awaken a particular set of Sankhāras, the Sankhāras associated in the mind with place.

Also there is perhaps a certain intangible yet operative atmosphere of thought which

clings to places in which definite acts have been done, definite thoughts constantly repeated. It is for this reason that we have a great sense of quiet and peace when we go to a monastery. The monastery is a place where life is protected, where men think deeply of the great mysteries of Life and Death; it is the home of those who are devoted to the practice of this meditation; it is the centre of the religious life of the people. When the Burmese people want to make merry, they have dramatic and singing entertainments, in their own houses, in the village; but when they feel religiously inclined, then they go to their monastery. So the great bulk of the thoughts which arise in a monastery are peaceful, and calm, and holy; and this atmosphere of peace and calm and holiness seems to penetrate and suffuse the whole place, till the walls and roof and flooring—nay, more, the very ground of the sacred enclosure—seem soaked with this atmosphere of holiness, like

some faint distant perfume that can hardly be scented, and yet that one can feel. It may be that some impalpable yet grosser portion of the thought-stuff thus clings to the very walls of a place; we cannot tell, but certain it is that if you blindfold a sensitive man and take him to a temple, he will tell you it is a peaceful and holy place; whilst if you take him to the shambles, he will feel uncomfortable or fearful.

And so we should choose for our practice of meditation a place which is suited to the work we have to do. It is a great aid, of course, owing to the very specialised set of place-Sankhāras so obtained, if we can have a special place in which nothing but these practices are done, and where no one but oneself goes; but, for a layman especially, this is very difficult to secure. Instructions are given on this point in the *Visuddhi Magga* how the priest who is practising *Kammaṭṭhāna* is to select some place a little away from the monastery, where people

do not come and walk about—either a cave or a cleft in the rocks. Or else he is to make or get made a little hut, which he alone uses. But as this perfect retirement is not easy to a layman, he must choose whatever place is most suitable—some place where, at the time of his practice, he will be as little disturbed as possible; and, if he is able, this place should not be the place where he sleeps, as the Sankhāras of such a place would tend, so soon as he tried to reduce the number of his thoughts down to one, to make him go to sleep, which is one of the chief things to be guarded against.

Time and place being once chosen, it is important, until the faculty of concentration is strongly established, not to alter them. Then bodily posture is to be considered. If we stand up to meditate, then a good deal of energy goes to maintain the standing posture. Lying down is also not good, because it is associated in our minds with going to sleep. Therefore the sitting

posture is best. If you can sit cross-legged, as Buddha-rupas sit, that is best; because this position has many good Sankhāras associated with it in the minds of Buddhist people.

Now comes the all-important question of what we are to meditate upon. The subjects of meditation are classified in the books under forty heads. In the old days a man wishing to practise *Kammaṭṭhāna* would go to some great man who had practised long, and had so attained to great spiritual knowledge; and by virtue of his spiritual knowledge that Arahan could tell which of the forty categories would best suit the aspirant. Nowadays this is hardly possible, as so few practise this Kammaṭṭhāna; and so it is next to impossible to find anyone with this spiritual insight. So the best thing to do will be to practise those forms of meditation which will most certainly increase the highest qualities in us, the qualities of Love, and Pity, and Sympathy, and Indifference

to worldly life and cares; those forms of Sammāsati which will give us an accurate perception of our own nature, and the Sorrow, Transitoriness, and Soullessness of all things on the Wheel of Samsāra; and those forms which will best calm our minds by making us think of holy and beautiful things, such as the life of The Buddha, the liberating nature of the Dhamma He taught, and the pure life which is followed by His Bhikkhus.

We have seen how a powerful Sankhāra is to be formed in one of two ways: either by one tremendous effort of concentration, or by many slight ones. As it is difficult for a beginner to make a tremendous effort, it will be found simplest to take one idea which can be expressed in a few words, and repeat those words silently over and over again. The reason for the use of a formula of words is that, owing to the complexity of the brain actions involved in the production

of words, very powerful Sankhāras are formed by this habit of silent repetition; the words serve as a very powerful mechanical aid in constantly evoking the idea they represent. In order to keep count of the number of times the formula has been repeated, Buddhist people use a rosary of a hundred and eight beads, and this will be found a very convenient aid. Thus one formulates to oneself the ideal of the Great Teacher; one reflects upon His Love and Compassion, on that great life of His devoted to the spiritual assistance of all beings; one formulates in the mind the image of The Master, trying to imagine Him as He taught that Dhamma which has brought liberation to so many; and every time the mental image fades, one murmurs *Buddhanussati*—"he reflects upon The Buddha"—each time of repetition passing over one of the beads of the rosary. And so with the Dhamma, and the Sangha—whichever one prefers to reflect upon.

But perhaps the best of all the various meditations upon the ideal, are what are known as the Four Sublime States—*Cattāro Brahma-vihāra.* These meditations calm and concentrate the Citta in a very powerful and effective way; and besides this they tend to increase in us those very qualities of the mind which are the best. One sits down facing east, preferably; and after reflecting on the virtues of the Ti-ratana, as set forth in the formulas *Iti pi so Bhagava,* etc., one concentrates one's thought upon ideas of Love; one imagines a ray of love going out from one's heart, and embracing all beings in the Eastern Quarter of the World, and one repeats this formula: "And he lets his mind pervade the Eastern Quarter of the World with thoughts of Love—with Heart of love grown great, and mighty, and beyond all measure—till there is not one being in all the Eastern Quarter of the World whom he has passed over, whom he has not suffused with thoughts

of Love, with Heart of Love grown great, and mighty, and far-reaching beyond all measure." As you say these words you imagine your love going forth to the east, like a great spreading ray of light; and first you think of all your friends, those whom you love, and suffuse them with your thoughts of love. Then you reflect upon all those innumerable beings in that Eastern Quarter whom you know not, to whom you are indifferent, but whom you should love; and you suffuse them also with the ray of your love. And lastly you reflect upon all those who are opposed to you, who are your enemies, who have done you wrong; and these too, by an effort of will, you suffuse with your love "till there is not one being in all that Eastern Quarter of the Earth whom you have passed over, whom you have not suffused with thoughts of Love, with Heart of Love grown great, and mighty, and beyond all measure". Again

you imagine a similar ray of love issuing from your heart in the direction of your right hand; and you mentally repeat the same formula, substituting the word "Southern" for "Eastern," and you go through the same series of reflections in that direction. And so to the west, and so to the north, till all around you, in the four directions, you have penetrated all beings with these thoughts of Love. And then you imagine your thought as striking downwards, and embracing and including all beings beneath you, repeating the same formula, and lastly as going upwards, and suffusing with the warmth of your love all beings in the worlds above. Thus you will have meditated upon all beings with thoughts of love, in all the six directions of space; and you have finished the meditation on Love.

In the same way, using the same formula, do you proceed with the other three Sublime States. Thinking of all beings who are

involved in the Wheel of Samsāra—involved in the endless sorrow of existence—thinking especially of those in whom at this moment sorrow is especially manifested, thinking of the weak, the unhappy, the sick, and those who are fallen; you send out a ray of pity and compassion towards them in the six directions of space. And so suffusing all beings with thoughts of Compassion, you pass on to the meditation on Happiness. You meditate on all beings who are happy, from the lowest happiness of earthly love to the highest, the happiness of those who are freed from all defect, the unutterable happiness of those who have attained the Nibbana Dhamma. You seek to feel with all those happy ones in their happiness, to enter into the bliss of their hearts and lives, and to augment it; and so you pervade all six directions with thoughts of happiness, with this feeling of sympathy with all that is happy, and fair, and good.

Then, finally, reflecting on all that is evil and cruel and bad in the world, reflecting on the things which tempt men away from the holy life, you assume to all evil beings thoughts of indifference—understanding that all the evil in those beings arises from ignorance; from the *Āsavas*, the leakages of mental power into wrong channels. You understand concerning them that it is not your duty to condemn, or revile, but only to be indifferent to them; and when you have finished this meditation on Indifference, you have completed the meditation on the Four Sublime States—on Love, and Pity, and Happiness, and Indifference. The meditation on Love will overcome in you all hatred and wrath; the meditation on Pity will overcome your Sankhāras of cruelty and unkindness; the meditation on Happiness will do away with all feelings of envy and malice; and the meditation on Indifference will take from you all sympathy with evil

ways and thoughts. And if you diligently practise these Four Sublime States, you will find yourself becoming daily more and more loving and pitiful, and happy with the highest happiness, and indifferent to personal misfortune and to evil. So very powerful is this method of meditation, that a very short practice will give results—results that you will find working in your life and thoughts, bringing peace and happiness to you, and to all around you.

Then there is the very important work of *Sammāsati*, the analysis of the nature of things which leads men to realise how in the Circle of Samsāra all is characterised by the three characteristics of Sorrow, and Transitoriness, and Soullessness; how there is nought that is free from these three characteristics; and how only right reflection and right meditation can free you from them, and can open for you the way to Peace. Because men are very

much involved in the affairs of the world; because so much of our lives is made up of our little hates and loves and hopes and fears; because we think so much of our wealth, and of those we love with earthly love, and of our enemies, and of all the little concerns of our daily life—therefore is this right perception very difficult to come by, very difficult to realise as absolute truth in the depth of our hearts. We think we have but one life and one body; so these we guard with very great attention and care, wasting useful mental energy upon these ephemeral things. We think we have but one state in life; and so we think very much of how to better our positions, how to increase our fortune.

"I have these sons, mine is this wealth—thus the foolish man is thinking: he himself hath not a self; how sons, how wealth?" But if we could look back over the vast stairway of our innumerable lives, if we could see how

formerly we had held all various positions, had had countless fortunes, countless children, innumerable loves and wives; if we could so look back, and see the constant and inevitable misery of all those lives, could understand our ever-changing minds and wills, and the whole mighty phantasmagoria of the illusion that we deem so real; if we could do this, then indeed we might realise the utter misery and futility of all this earthly life, might understand and grasp those three characteristics of all existent things. Then indeed would our desire to escape from this perpetual round of sorrow be augmented, so that we would work with all our power unto Liberation.

There is one form of Sati meditation which is very helpful, the more so as it is not necessarily confined to any one particular time of the day, but can be done always, whenever we have a moment in which our mind is not engaged. This is the *Mahasatipaṭṭhāna*, or Great

Reflection. Whatever you are doing, just observe and make a mental note of it, being careful to understand of what you see that it is possessed of the three characteristics of Sorrow, Impermanence, and lack of an Immortal Principle or soul. Think of the action you are performing, the thought you are thinking, the sensation you are feeling, as relating to some exterior person; take care not to think "*I* am doing so-and-so" but "There exists such-and-such a state of action". Thus take bodily actions. When you go walking, just concentrate the whole of your attention upon what you are doing, in an impersonal kind of way. Think: "Now he is raising his left foot," or, better: "There is an action of the lifting of a left foot." "Now there is a raising of the right foot; now the body leans a little forwards, and so advances; now it turns to the right; and now it stands still." In this way, just practise concentrating the mind in observing

all the actions that you perform, all the sensations that arise in your body, all the thoughts that arise in your mind; and always analyse each concentration object as in the case cited above of the bodily action of walking. "What is it that walks?" and by accurate analysis you reflect that there is no person or soul within the body that walks, but that there is particular collection of chemical elements, united and held together by the result of certain categories of forces, as cohesion, chemical attraction, and the like. These acting in unison, owing to a definite state of co-ordination, appear to walk, move this way and that, and so on, owing to, and concurrent with, the occurrence of certain chemical decompositions going on in brain and nerve and muscle and blood; this state of co-ordination which renders such complex actions possible is the resultant of the forces of innumerable similar states of co-ordination; and the

resultant of all these past states of co-ordination acting together constitute what is called a living human being. Thus owing to certain other decompositions and movements of the fine particles composing the brain, the idea arises "*I* am walking," but really there is no "I" to walk or go, but only an ever-changing mass of decomposing chemical compounds. Such a decomposing mass of chemical compounds has in it nothing that is permanent, but is, on the other hand, subject to pain and grief and weariness of body and mind; its principal tendency is to form new sets of co-ordinated forces of a similar nature—new Sankhāras which in their turn will cause new similar combinations of chemical elements to arise—thus making an endless chain of beings subject to the miseries of birth, disease, decay, old age, and death. And the only way of escape from this perpetual round of existences is the following of the Noble Eightfold Path

declared by the Sammāsambuddha; it is only by diligent practice of His Precepts that we can obtain the necessary energy for the performance of Concentration; by Sammāsati and Sammāsamādhi alone the final release from all this suffering is to be obtained. By practising earnestly all these reflections and meditations the way to liberation will be opened for us—even the way which leads to Nibbana, the State of Changeless Peace. Thus do you constantly reflect, alike on the Body, Sensations, Ideas, Sankhāras, and the Consciousness.

Such is a little part of the way of meditation, the way whereby the mind and heart may be purified and cultivated. And now for a few final remarks.

It must first be remembered that no amount of reading or talking about these things is worth a single moment's practice of them. These are things to be *done*, not speculated

upon; and only he who practises can obtain the fruits of meditation.

There is one other thing to be said, and that is concerning the importance of *Sīla*, of Right Conduct, of Moral Behavior. It has been said that Sīla alone cannot conduct to the Nibbana Dhamma; but, nevertheless, this Sīla is of the most vital importance, for there is no *Samādhi*, no Mental Concentration without *Sīla*, without Right Conduct. And why? Because, reverting to our simile of the steam-engine, while *Samādhi*, Mental Concentration, is the steam power of this human machine—the fire that heats the water, the fire that makes that steam and maintains it at high pressure, is the power of Sīla. A man who breaks Sīla is putting out his fire; and sooner or later, according to his reserve stock of Sīla fuel, he will have little or no more energy at his disposal. And so, this Sīla is of eminent importance; we must avoid evil, we must fulfil all good, for only in this

way can we obtain energy to practise and apply our Buddhist philosophy; only in this way can we carry into effect that third rule of the stanza which has been our text; only thus can we really follow in our Master's footsteps, and carry into effect His rule for the purification of the mind. Only by this way, and by constantly bearing in mind and living up to his final utterance—"*Athakho, bhikkhave, āmentayāmi vo; vayadhammā sankhārā, āppamādena sampādetha*" for there is no Samādhi, no Mental Concentration, without *Sīla*, without Right Conduct.

"Lo! now, Oh Brothers, I exhort ye! Decay is inherent in all the Tendencies; therefore, deliver ye yourselves by earnest effort."

THE MIRACULOUS ELEMENT IN BUDDHISM

WHEN, in the magic crystal of imagination we evoke the mental imagery of our earlier childhood's years, and recall how then we saw and heard and felt and thought; how life appeared, appealed, and called to us, then fresh from its re-making, one feature stands out clear and vivid. Even amidst our dimmest memories of those bygone days there dominates each pictured recollection—the all-pervading, ever-present sense of the keen *wonder* of it all; that wonder in which the noble thinker of ancient Greece perceived the root and source of all our human wisdom.

Later in life, indeed, we may encounter things more seeming new and strange. We

may travel into distant lands and live amidst conditions utterly different from all that we have grown accustomed to. But never, if we make exception of a man's first penetration into the interior spiritual realm, never after those first early years can aught that life brings us so move our hearts to wonder, so thrill our very being to the core, as did the common sights and sounds that life brought us in our early childhood. In those days the mere scent of flowers in the springtime, the sight of some familiar scene by moonlight, the voice of a singing bird in summer woods, could call forth an answer in a very passion of wonder, till the veil of the visible seemed trembling to the point of rending. The veil of matter seemed about to part to make clear the way for childish feet and eager, opened arms to reach forth into a world of never-ending glamor, into the faery realm where all is marvellous and beautiful beyond dreaming, into the land

of undying Youth, where there is joy for evermore.

Such is childhood's dream, the leaping and the laughter of the little stream new sprung from the dark confinement of the earth, rejoicing in the freedom of its careless movement, each fall and turning of its way the harbinger of new joys, new wonders yet to come. As we have learned during this past few generations, wherein so vast a field of knowledge has opened to the gaze of man, the child but recapitulates, and in its smaller scale epitomises, all the great common story of the growth of the whole human race. So the babe of a few days' growth, so helpless and weak-seeming, can yet support its weight and will cling to and hang from the stick we place within its grip. Thus he enacts the story of its half-simian and arboreal ancestry: reverting to the age when the forerunner of the human species was compelled in infancy to cling to

boughs of trees, or to its shaggy mother's breast as she bore it through the woods. So the healthy boy of a later age delights in woodcraft, in playing the Red Indian, in mimic warfare. So, too, the younger child delights in playing with stones, in dim race-memory of the palæolithic age. Thus all young children love to mould the clay into some dim resemblance to man's earliest attempts at pottery. Every natural child finds fascination in a sea-shell, earliest adornment of mankind, and listens with wonder, as his remote adult forbear listened, to the murmuring voice within the shell, telling of the music of the waves it never can forget.

Thus, then, we learn that that keen sense of wonder, that thrilling sense of imminent, marvellous happenings, of inner doors about to open on a world of fantasy and of enchantment which we have seen so dominating all our earlier life, must have surely been the common

feeling, the common attitude, even of adult humanity in the ages that have passed away. Even lacking other evidence, we should know it must have been so. But in fact there is evidence enough and to spare to just that same effect. The earliest of human literatures that have come down to us, all tell this selfsame story of an all-pervading wonderment at life; of marvellous happenings; of wholesale miracles and magic powers. If one can see the wonder in the world, that life is full of mystery, then there are "miracles" enough and to spare!

Here we do not wish to be misunderstood to imply that, either then or now, there were or are no marvellous happenings; or that the bulk of the strange marvels that the old books record happened really only in the imaginations of those peoples of the childhood of our race. All the wonders of the Thousand Nights and One fade into insignificance before the daily, momentarily repeated mystery of life, of

growth; to say nothing of the utter miracle of consciousness, that one is conscious. The more we learn of the nature of the mind of man, little as yet we know of it, the more do we see how all those ancient miracles *might* have happened, even if they did not happen in quite the way that their recorders thought they did. If it comes to that, what *now* happens exactly as the wisest of us moderns think it does? Till man has no more to learn, he will never fully understand, or rightly see, the least and commonest of happenings in his daily life.

There is a very interesting theory which has of late years been put forward to explain the undoubted fact that animals, and even insects, are able to communicate intelligence, even of happenings that, to their undeveloped minds, must seem quite complicated. It is supposed that the method of communication, common to the animal world and to humanity before the development of language, lies in

telepathy: in the direct transmission of ideas from mind to mind. Mankind also, it is suggested, was sensitive to mental images, till the growing use of speech, and its substitution for the earlier method of communication, superseded this more direct, but less certain, telepathic communication. By disuse this telepathy grew slowly atrophied, except, perhaps, in rare cases of reversion, or amongst very primitive communities, or under unusual conditions such as special training or the like.

This hypothesis, as has been said, was brought forward to explain certain undoubted facts. Into those facts, beyond the bare generalisation of animal communication, as into certain curious collateral evidence which goes far to lend support to the idea, it is unnecessary here to enter. The theory is only introduced at this point because, in connection with what we know of the subliminal self, the

hypothesis casts a very illuminating sidelight on this subject of marvellous happenings.

The work of the more modern psychologists has demonstrated the fact that, besides the ordinary active and self-conscious mental faculties, of which we are all aware, and with which we now are functioning, there exists in each one of us a whole vast realm of mental functions. To these, since normally they remain, at our present stage of mental development, below the threshold of consciousness, the name of the Subliminal Self is given. With the normal human being in this age, this extensive realm of mental faculties (faculties which in some respects transcend by far those of the normal waking mind) remains as it were asleep, or inactive, during waking life. It is only when the normal waking life is temporarily suspended, as may occur in ordinary sleep, in dreams, in somnambulism, and most notably in the hypnotic state, that these underlying

powers of the subliminal self are active and dominant. When this occurs, during the temporary abeyance of the normal waking mind, an entirely new and in many respects a most remarkable set of mental phenomena is found to occur. Take, for example, the faculty of memory. This, as we all know only too well, is in waking life a very imperfect and often unreliable faculty. It is, indeed, just when we most need to recall some particular event, name or idea, that it completely eludes our groping search. The memory of the subliminal self, on the other hand, appears almost miraculously perfect. It would appear as though no single impression of sense, no faintest conception of an idea, ever entered, even unconsciously, into the waking mind, into the content of our experience, but that it is promptly and perfectly registered in the subliminal realm. Thence it may be recovered when this subliminal self is in possession. If, for

example, we have forgotten some important word or idea, our best way to recover it is, not to continue groping after it in the conscious mind, but simply to go to sleep whilst thinking of its associated ideas.

A better example, however, of this perfect memory of the subliminal mind is to be found in the old classic case of the woman who, when hypnotised, would recite with perfect accent and intonation the Hebrew text of various of the Psalms. As this woman was of the working class, and quite illiterate even in her own language, this appeared to the thinkers of that time (it happened about a century ago, before the nature of the subliminal self was known at all) well-nigh a miracle, until, on going into the past history of that woman, it was discovered that she had formerly been maidservant to a clergyman, a great Hebrew scholar. He was in the habit of walking about his study and declaiming the

text of various favorite Psalms! The maidservant, of course, could not understand a single syllable. If asked what her master was reciting she would probably have answered: "Oh, some old gibberish or other!" Naturally, in her normal mental state she could not have reproduced a single word of those, to her, unintelligible utterances. But every syllable and tone and accent of it all was perfectly recorded, perfectly registered by the subliminal mind; and so, when in later years it happened, through hypnosis, that this subliminal mind was in possession, the whole of that unconsciously stored knowledge could be tapped.

Another most remarkable faculty of the subliminal mind is its seemingly perfect sense of the lapse of time. All who have studied accounts of modern experiments in hypnotism will be well aware that if, to a hypnotised subject, the hypnotiser makes a post-hypnotic suggestion for a determinate time, for example,

that the patient shall, after he or she is awake, perform such an action at precisely 1,567 seconds after being wakened, that patient, in nine cases out of ten, will carry out the suggestion exactly at the moment thus precisely designated. Needless to say, without constant reference to a very accurate clock, such a feat would be impossible to any ordinary person in the waking state.

This brings us to the point we wish to draw attention to. If we can, so to speak, give a command to this subliminal self whilst it is in a condition to hear us, that command will, even after a return to the ordinary mental state, be carried out. It is as though the subliminal mind had the power, as it were, of *dramatising* an idea impressed upon it into an actual and seeming objective happening. Suggest to a hypnotised person that, after awakening, he will see on some blank sheet of paper some definite design, and his wakened mind will see

it. More remarkable still, if you, say, trace on the patient's arm a cross with cold metal rod, having suggested that the simple figure so traced out will appear in a few hours as if the mark were branded, then, somehow or other, the very flesh of the body will obey the command in the designated time. This will happen long after the patient, utterly unaware of the command, has awakened, and that design will duly appear. Here the phenomenon is not merely subjective, but it actually objectivises. No doubt exists as to the possibility of this phenomenon. It has been produced hundreds, perhaps thousands, of times within the last few years.

To connect up what has been said concerning the subliminal mind with what has gone before, it may be pointed out that there is every reason for supposing that it is this subliminal mind which is concerned in telepathy; even as, in rather rare cases, that mind

seems capable of sheer clairvoyance and even foresight.

There is, however, every reason for supposing that this great group of powers of the mind which we now, for the reason that has been mentioned, term the subliminal self or mind, was far more active, entered far more completely into the normal waking mental life of mankind, in bygone ages than it does in our present times. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that that realm of mental action was nearer to the threshold of consciousness then than now; it was more readily susceptible of being evoked. To take one only of the many facts which point in this direction. We have seen how the mind of the child tends to a constant state of what we may term *expectancy*. It is ever ready to suppose itself on the verge of some great and marvellous happening. Now this state of expectancy, as those who have studied modern hypnotism well know, is just

one of the conditions which predispose to the sudden lowering of the threshold to the inclusion of more or less of the subliminal realm. It has been noted that any condition which may characterise modern childhood is probably a reminder, a recapitulation, of the state in which the human adult of a thousand years or more ago commonly lived during his lifetime. So this tendency of childhood to expectancy, with its implication of ready suggestibility, must have been the normal state of mind some thousands of years ago.

Why is it, then, that when we make some suggestion involving the marvellous, the unusual or unexpected, to the normal adult developed mind as it is now, that suggestion altogether fails of its effect? Partly, no doubt, because the readily suggestible subliminal mind is then, the person being awake, dormant or partly inactive. But mainly it is because the awake mind, aware of the unusualness of the

suggestion, strongly *inhibits* that idea from seizing hold upon the consciousness. If, then, we could by any means make our suggestion in such a fashion that it reached the subliminal self without reaching the awake mind with its sane tendency to veto the unusual, then we might be able to get our suggestion dramatised into subjective, or even objective fact, just as we now can with a hypnotised person.

But there is only one way now known to us of doing this, of speaking, as it were, to the subliminal mind direct, without the knowledge or the intervention of the waking mind. That means is by telepathic communication of the suggestion direct from mind to mind. We have seen how it is partly at least the subliminal mind that is concerned in such telepathy as now is possible, both in respect of the transmitter and the receiver of the idea. Bearing, then, in mind the fact that those ancient peoples lived, so to speak, far more in the

subliminal realm than is now the case, we can at once come to see why it was that what we may term the miraculous was so much more common than it is now. Again we must not be misunderstood to imply that the so-called miracles did not happen, or rather that they happened only in the imagination of those childlike peoples. For we must remember how, even with the very little that we now know of the powers of the subliminal region, it is possible under proper conditions to produce actual objective happenings, like the appearance of the brand-mark on a person's skin. Once grant that the subliminal was in those early ages nearer to the surface than it now is, and we can understand how widely this opens the door for the relatively frequent occurrence of what are commonly termed miracles.

It was not, then, in respect of faulty observation, or the pure imagination, of these strange phenomena that most of

the ancient peoples went so far astray. The case, indeed, was closely comparable to that of modern so-called spiritualistic phenomena. The miracles, we may quite comfortably with our modern knowledge grant, *did* happen; just as (apart from cases of fraudulent "mediums") the modern phenomena of the séance-room do occur. One must, however, admit these to be very feeble beside the effects of the old-time workers of marvels. It was, then as now, in respect of the *interpretation* placed upon those events that men made the profoundest error. Then, the common misapprehension was that the miracle-worker produced his effects through the agency, compelled or voluntary, of the gods—just as now the common error of the modern spiritualist is to imagine the phenomena of the séance-room to be the work of spirits of the dead. And most of the marvel-workers, then, themselves believed in, and attributed their wonders to,

their gods—just as now most mediums believe in, and attribute their phenomena to, their so-called "spirit guides".

And, since those ancient peoples naturally attributed to their gods the possession in an enhanced degree of all their own higher mental characters, they fell into a far more profound and more far-reaching error in respect of the marvels of which they deemed them the prime movers. In the gods, they thought, was the spirit of Truth. The marvels were the direct work of the gods. Therefore they were the proof of the truth of whatever doctrine the gods' servant, the visible miracle-worker, gave utterance to.

Here, of course, we moderns, with our logically trained minds, altogether part company with those old-time thinkers. If a man should come to us, and perform some seemingly marvellous feat before our eyes, we should, if we were seized of the scientific spirit, be

intensely interested in the phenomena. But however many, and however great and wonderful, were the phenomena, we should not on that account be in the least inclined to accept as true whatever doctrine that wonder-worker might be pleased to teach. We should, indeed, regard the claim, that *because* he could work wonders, *therefore* his teaching was true, as wholly illogical and absurd. But it was far otherwise with the ancients. To them, the proof of true doctrine lay in good, sound miracles. The proof that a man had real knowledge of the nature of the deeper things of life lay in his capacity to produce these wonders. So much so, that with most of the old-time religions, like Christianity, the marvels were adduced in proof of the divine mission and true doctrine of the Founder. Even modern Christians, for example, would, we think, agree in admitting that, if the crowning miracle of the resurrection of their Founder did

not happen as an historical fact, then Christian teaching loses its claim to being inspired Truth.

In ancient India, the very home of high spiritual development, and of the most wonderful of miracles, this wrong view of the value of the miracle as a proof of doctrine was of course most widely spread. So much so, that we find in our Buddhist Scriptures many a tale of how this or that religious teacher (in one celebrated case a whole body of such teachers) came to The Buddha to propose a sort of contest in miracle-working, as a proof of the superiority of their respective doctrines, be it understood.

As might be expected from what has already been said in connection with the underlying mental faculties, it is a part of Buddhist Teaching that a person can gain control over the hidden forces of his own mind as they develop, and the power to affect the minds of others in various ways. Certain of these would

distinctly come under the heading of the so-called miraculous. But although these powers over the minds of others, and even over what we should term objective phenomena, are said to come naturally to most in the normal course of their interior development towards Arahanship, it must not be supposed that, according to Buddhist Teaching, the possession of these powers, or their exercise, proves a man to be of high and spiritual development. Rather, indeed, in some ways it is the opposite. To the aspirant himself, the development of these powers is regarded as a possible snare, because he may become so interested in them, and in the new worlds which their possession opens to his investigation, as to forget the higher teaching, and to neglect his training for the Path itself. On the other hand (these powers being simply powers, and therefore, like all powers, capable of being put to ends either good or bad) they may be developed by

quite selfish and worldly persons. Thus their possession proves nothing at all save a certain degree of mastery over one's own mind, and over the forces of Nature.

This brings us to what is the most remarkable circumstance of all: namely, that whilst Buddhism, like all ancient teachings, declared the existence of these mental powers, and indeed used them in its own curriculum of interior development, it yet put them exactly in the place that the modern scientific and logical mind would put them. It denied that they proved anything at all as to the truth or otherwise of the doctrine that might accompany them. The Buddha Himself, indeed, was said to possess (as would naturally follow from their connection with interior mental control) these powers in a more exalted degree than any other saint or sage. We are told how, on one occasion, a whole body of fire-worshipping ascetics challenged

the Great Teacher to one of those contests in the miraculous which have been referred to, with the usual illogical object of proving, by their superior miracles, the superiority of their doctrine over His. The Master accepted the challenge, wishing, once and for all, to put an end to these continued and unreasoning claims, and to place, by a supreme object-lesson, this matter of miracles in its proper place.

So, tradition tells us, the contest was held, in the presence of a vast concourse of people, attracted by the very human desire to see who would get the best of it. As the challenging party, the fire-worshippers, whose *pièce de résistance* was making the fire of sacrifice kindle by their magical mastery over the fire-element, first took the field. But the far greater power of The Buddha altogether prevented, or even reversed, the effect that they were wont easily to produce. And then, after

an altogether unparalleled display of marvels, so wonderful that even the fire-worshipping ascetics themselves became His followers, the Great Teacher preached a sermon to the assembled multitude on the Wrong Marvel and the Right. He showed how all these marvels were beside the point of true Religion, of Right Understanding; how they proved nothing for or against the truth of any body of teaching. Such things, He said, were mere worldly powers, which anyone who chose to take the needful trouble could acquire. What, then, He asked, was the Right Miracle? It lay, He said, in the incomparable power of Truth itself, which, apart from any really unconnected display of wonders, could so seize upon and move men's hearts as to make them altogether change their lives. *That* was the Right Marvel, as He saw it: just the power of Truth to endure, to triumph in men's hearts and live for ever, even when all these worlds, that are in

themselves such miracles, will have perished utterly.

Such, then, is the attitude which Buddhism (in this, as in many other respects, so singularly modern in its outlook upon life) takes up towards the question of the miraculous. The Buddhist sacred books, like all other ancient literature, teem, indeed, with tales of the miraculous and marvellous. But, according to the understanding of even the most unenlightened of Buddhists, it relies in no least degree upon these wonders for its own support. Take away, if you care to do so, every marvel recorded in the Buddhist books, and in The Teacher's own words, the greatest miracle of all will yet remain—the miracle of the power of Truth to conquer falsehood; even when the Truth is hard to bear, when the falsehood appeals to every hope and passion in our hearts.

Fundamentally, of course, here as in other contexts where this word *Dhamma*,

which I have translated Truth, is concerned, it is rather the great spiritual power which, reigning behind all consciousness, lies at the back of every form of progress. At its highest it is manifested in the Path of Attainment; in its lowest aspect, perhaps it is responsible even for physical evolution. But, in a secondary degree, it means just what we moderns mean by Truth—a body of knowledge which is in harmony with the facts of life. And how great a wonder is even that lower, manifested Dhamma, all the story of humanity but goes to prove. Looking back on the history of our own civilisation, we see that dim reflection of the Truth Supernal conquer in face of all the hopes and fancies and desires of man. We see it, in the Middle Ages, dammed back, crushed down by every power of Church and State, yet conquering in the end, in spite of all that Church and State could do. Against the very hopes, the keen

desires of man, we see it triumph even over rack and stake. It is that great miracle of Truth which here to-day has emptied and is emptying the Churches which preach a creed whose very sanction lies in that old error that a miracle proves Truth.

Not so indeed. As an ancient Buddhist saying has it: "*Truth verily is deathless speech.*" Deathless and unconquerable, whether it has sprung from intensest interior spiritual attainment, or from the patient study of the Universe which our outer senses present, Truth will spread and grow amongst the hearts of men, till all our ignorances, our errors, shall have passed away; until at last, after all this weary round of cyclic transmigration, it shall come home to each one of us in its highest, holiest form. Whoso wins that Highest Truth knows that he has no more to do; that the hidden purpose of his being is fulfilled at last; that for him there is no more of living as

we know it. For, as The Master said, it is only "*By not-knowing and not-understanding that we have come to live so many pain-filled lives.*"

THE RULE OF THE INNER KINGDOM

In Burma there is one of the lesser lessons which The Master taught us, that still survives, ages of torpor notwithstanding. That lesson is the lesson of Charity, one of the mere minor lessons of our faith, namely, that as compassion, or thought for others is noblest of all human sentiments and ideals, therefore one who would call himself in truth a Buddhist, should give of his worldly goods to the poor or to religion. That is one Buddhist lesson that Burma's race has learned; you know the fruits of it; you know how far your fellow-men live up to it; it is indeed your proudest title to the name of followers of Him who once was called Vessantara the King. You know how large a part of all this nation's wealth is spent for purposes of religion; a

vastly larger moiety of the national wealth for religion than any other race on earth can boast of! Now, indeed, for want of comprehension of the real meaning of our motto, "The gift of Truth outweighs all other gifts," most of that wealth goes in what we may term "brick-and-mortar" Charity; but still is the lesser lesson learned, and, what is more to the point, it bears fruit in every Burman's life. Teach your new, higher rendering of that lesson; teach, as The Master taught, that greater than these so quickly ruined clay-gifts is the Truth itself, the Law you seek hereby to follow; teach that indeed the gift of Truth is nobler, greater than all other gifts; and in years to come, what could not this single race achieve—in these days of facile transit and of the printing-press—with two-thirds of humanity that so far has not heard The Master's Law? Turn but a tithe, but the hundredth part, of that so generous tide of

Charity to water the fallow fields of a true wakening of Buddhist life, of Buddhist propaganda; turn but a fraction of your bricks to books; a fraction of your Monks again, as in the ancient glorious days, to teachers of the Way in other lands; and you shall see, here in this actual moving world and not in dreams of heavenly future life, the Immediate Fruit—*Sandiṭṭhikaphalaṁ*—of The Master's Teaching. You will fulfil the purpose of His Law, and bring His Light to multitudes still waiting in the darkness, and watching still the eastern sky for signs of dawn.

Even so did He behold it, when, making clear His Heavenly Vision, He looked upon the Triple World, and watched the presage of the day to come: The hearts of countless myriads of beings plunged in Samsāra's wave, like lotuses unnumbered; and each the symbol of the miracle and mystery of a life, such miracle as men so often live and die uncomprehending;

heirs of infinitudes unnumbered, yet wasteful of the swift-winged hours, plunged in the threefold tide of Craving, Hatred, and Illusion, unseen, even to themselves, by reason of Avijja's night; many, alas, still clinging to the mire they sprang from; yet many another striving upwards through the clearer waters; some even well-nigh to the surface, waiting in the gloom with hearts unopened, in a world wherein as yet Truth's glory had not dawned. Such was His Vision of the world to come, and so did He, the Wisest, figure what otherwise might not be conceived of; the mystery of universal life, slowly moulded from primeval Chaos, as the lotus by life's alchemy transmutes dead clay to root, to leaf, and final bloom. So, with the Buddha-vision He beheld it, and perceived: "Many there are now, and shall follow in the ages yet to come, hearts well-nigh free from all these three floods, who, if the Truth's great sun should dawn, would

open to reflect his rays"; and, so knowing, did He then decide to set on foot the Kingdom of Righteousness, so that in the hearts of men that light of Truth might come.

To take a part in that great work, however humble, to live and strive for that great realisation, how high a task! yet it is within the reach of all of us, howsoever little be his earthly lot; a task indeed ever bearing for the gathering its Immediate Fruit—the harvest of the Dhamma, Inviting, Timeless, Sure!

Such is in fact a part of the possibilities life has for us here in this outer world, the world wherein our fellows live and strive. Yet, for each one of us, there is yet another Kingdom which we may help to enlighten; a Kingdom indeed near, necessary, vital to us, if in the outer realm our work shall prosper and attain. In the outer world our words, our work, our life has influence; wider and wider we may kindle in our comrades' hearts the

ancient spirit of our Buddhist faith; but here we have the power of influence only. In the inner kingdom, it is we who are at once the ruler and the ruled; as in the face of Yama, Death's Great King, all men and all beings of the Threefold World stand equal, even so stand we all in respect of conquest or failure in this inner empire. Without, our lot, our power for good, is as our bygone actions made it; within, our only present possession is the kingdom of the heart, where none can gainsay us or thwart the hope we have.

Now, then, in this our empire indeed the throne of power may be usurped either by passion or hate or folly, rightly not our ruler but our slave, to whom betimes we foolishly bow. How in this kingdom of the mind should we so rightly order all our ways, that we may become indeed the ruler of that inalienable realm, Lords of Self's Sovereignty, and walk therein as did Asoka in

the world? It is our great ideal to spread through the kingdoms of the earth the over-lordship of the King of Truth. How should we live and work that for a surety *one* realm at least may own His sway, as outcome, as visible Immediate Fruit of our ideal—"Live so as to merit the name of Buddhist"—and win thereby the inner power which alone can make our words and deeds influence our comrades in the outer world, the world of men?

The answer to this vital question is the simplest in the world, so far as words go; most difficult of all things, when it comes to real achievement. Let us consider the words of it, even as spoken by The Buddha Himself.

Under the great twin Sāla-tree by Mallian Kusināra the Lion of the Sakya Clan lies nigh to death; the life that changed and still throughout the centuries is changing all the history of humanity is now swiftly drawing to its end. About Him kneel a mighty company

of the Brethren, such a company, indeed, as now I fear the visible Sangha of the world could never furnish; for all of them save Ananda have won to Life's Supremest Goal, Arahans, ever beholding, face to face, Nibbana's glory; the Three Great Floods for them crossed over; their course towards the Eternal finished; passed, gone over to the Further Shore.

Now at that time, the story in the Sutta tells us, Beings innumerable from all the Heavens above gathered to Kusināra's grove to pay what seemed a fitting reverence to Him who was Teacher both of gods and men, even the laws of Nature changing, so that these might have their will. All out of season the Sāla-tree brake into blossom, and the flowers scattered and sprinkled themselves over the body of the Tathāgata, out of reverence for the Successor of the Buddhas of Old. And heavenly Mandarava-flowers came falling from the skies, and these also scattered and sprinkled

themselves all over the body of the Tathāgata, out of reverence for the Successor of the Buddhas of Old. And heavenly perfumes fell from the skies, and these scattered and sprinkled themselves over the body of the Tathāgata, out of reverence for the Successor of the Buddhas of Old. And the sound of the voices of the gods, singing the Triumph of The Teacher, and heavenly music, came floating on the breeze, out of reverence for the Successor of the Buddhas of Old; till on that moonlit night in Kusināra's grove it seemed as though all Nature and the gods themselves had united to offer fitting reverence and fitting worship to Him who lay there; waiting for Death's last boon. But The Teacher spoke, and all the gods were silent: "*It is not thus, O Ananda, that the Tathāgatas are rightly worshipped, rightly reverenced, rightly borne in mind. But whoso, Ananda, whether Bhikkhu or Bhikkhuni, Upāsaka or Upāsikā, shall walk according to the Teaching*

I have given, by such an one am I rightly worshipped, rightly reverenced, rightly borne in mind!"

So is our answer. The true worship of the Buddhas is not even in divinest-seeming outer offering or praise; rightly that one shall be called a follower of The Buddha, rightly will he merit the name of Buddhist, who walks the Way The Buddha found; that is, the Way, that He, the Master of Compassion, walked first Himself, twenty-five centuries ago in India.

To be a Buddhist, then—to rule as Cakkavatti king over this our personal heart's empire—means no outer act of worship, no lip-testimony of Buddhism; but only walking in such wise as all our powers make possible, in just that Way the Buddhas walked of old. It means to set before us, not *sometimes* only, but through every hour of our lives, and to the utmost of our powers, the ideals by which the Buddhas shape their lives; to aspire as they

aspired; to live and walk in such high hopes as the Bodhisattas, the Buddhas-to-be, have lived. Nor is this unattainable, remote, impossible; for you must always remember that the Way of the Buddhas is not the Way they walk in that last life on earth wherein the Final Enlightenment is won; the Bodhisattas begin to walk in that Way from the far distant day in which their great resolve is taken. But the Bodhisattas—save only for the special Ideal, ever-growing as they win to height after height of that Path—are men such as ourselves, perchance taking even lower birth according to their deeds. So that, if, as indeed is true, we cannot achieve such a life as that which in this last birth The Buddha led, still, if we shape our lives by the ideal which from the beginning inspires the Bodhisatta, we, to some small extent and in some humble manner, can even now enter, immeasurably distant though the Goal may be, on that one Path whereon to

walk is to be truly worthy of the name we claim.

The work we have to do, then, that we may make this our heart's empire Buddhist, is, primarily, to strive after one definite ideal. Whatever else we may do, whatever special virtue we may strive for, whatever discipline we may practise, whatever religious exercises we may use, it must be with that one aim in view; the aim that characterises the Way the Buddhas go, even though five hundred lives may lie between us and the Great Attainment.

What that especial ideal is, all Buddhists know full well; its keyword is Renunciation; its hope is the attainment of the higher Wisdom; its aim is the relief of somewhat of the world's great suffering, the winning of enlightenment and power, not that oneself may profit by it, but that benefit may come to all the living world. This is the special purpose, the sublime ideal, characterising the Way the

Buddhas walk; it is to have, and to live up to that ideal, far off and humbly though it be, thus to work and strive and suffer, so that thereby all life may find the Way of Peace.

Hear how The Master Himself describes, in the *Patisambhida-magga*, the nature of that ideal. We must remember, of course, that here it is no humble follower that is speaking, therefore it is no aspiration such as we might frame, nor language we might use; but the final blossoming of that ideal of the Great Compassion, in the language of One who had attained—finished His work, and won the Goal—and possessed of the power which comes to him who life after life has walked Renunciation's Way.

"On fire are all the habitations of the world, so seeing, the Great Compassion for living things descends into the Hearts of the Buddhas, the Exalted Ones! Fallen into an evil way . . . without a shelter . . . without a

refuge . . . inflated, unsoothed, so seeing, the Great Compassion for all living things descends into the Hearts of the Buddhas, the Exalted Ones! Pierced is the world with many darts, and there is none to draw them out but I! Flung into a cage of corruption, enwrapped with the gloom of ignorance, and there is none can make it to see light but I! None but Myself is able to put out the fires of lust and misery. I crossed over, I can make them cross; freed, I can make them free; so seeing, the Great Compassion descends into the Hearts of the Buddhas, the Exalted Ones."

Such is The Master's own expression of the Great Ideal. Surely we indeed are very very far from that glad realisation—"Freed, I can make them free"—far indeed from that perfection of Pity, outcome of many a life spent on the Way of all the Buddhas, which in the Text is called the Great Compassion; still, in our lesser way we can fill our lives and light

our hearts with that ideal. That it is, truly, to "rightly worship, rightly reverence, rightly bear in mind" the Greatest of the wide world's Teachers, to follow in the Path He went, to live according to His Law.

Who, indeed, in this our life with all its petty trials, has not, in an immediate and obvious way, countless opportunities to rule his kingdom after that ideal? Chiefly, of course, living after that ideal means an ordering of the inner kingdom of the mind, the constant resumption of the thought: "I will live and work and strive only that the sorrow in the hearts of all may thereby be diminished"; that, and the constant watchful suppression of every thought for self as it may arise. But, apart from the heart's kingdom, in relation to the outer world about us, how much benefit we could confer on those who live about us by ever striving to bring forth fruits of our ideal in the little multitudinous relations with our

fellows that make up our lives! Slowly, alas! even with rigidest constant rule, may we perceive the fruits, in ever-growing love and understanding, of the attempt to win this interior empire to the Way of the Buddhas; quickly, on the other hand, do we perceive the welcome fruit of this our golden rule put into practice in the outer world! To bear sorrow silently, and present a smiling face to the world without, lest the visible tokens of our grief should bring suffering to the hearts of others; to avoid sharp-spoken words; to abhor as our great enemy each least act fraught with another's pain; to count as gain each helpful word spoken or deed done for those about us—how soon, of all such sowings of our great ideal, may we not see the fruits in our comrades' lives! Far we may be, and far indeed we are, from being able even to conceive the nature of the Great Compassion that the Buddhas, the Awakened, feel; like so many a

term used in the *Buddhavacanam*, this stands for a state of consciousness not to be attained save as the outcome of many an arduous life. But if the Pity of the Buddhas now lies far beyond our grasp, our very thought, its seed, the Pity of Mankind may still be sown, and its harvest gathered, be ever so small the world wherein we live and move.

One thing essential to the ordering of the inner kingdom is the daily practice of definite mental culture, *Bhavana*, to that end. *Sīla* and *Dāna*, practice of Virtue and of Charity, are the common bases of all the great religions; of themselves they are quite unable to bring anything more than happier and freer lives; their fruit is in the future, rarely visible now in this earthly life. But the practice of Bhavana alone can lead us to the Holy Path; its fruits are immediate, visible in our hearts and ways. It is as the Royal Edicts, carved on rock and stone, wherewith, like the emperor

Asoka, we may make known the purpose of our rule to every subject of the inner empire.

In Burma there are many works dealing with the details of the various practices of Bhavana; here, in connection with the special ideal which should inspire the would-be Buddhist, I can indicate the barest outline of but one. Choosing some time when we can be alone each day (the times of dawn and sunset are the best, but any time will do so long as it is always the same time), sitting alone after our daily religious exercises, we call to mind the words of The Buddha treating of the meditation on Compassion. "And he lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Compassion, and so the second, so the third, and so the fourth; so that the whole wide world, above, around, below, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with thoughts of Compassion; with Heart of Compassion grown great, mighty and far-reaching and beyond all

measure. Just as, Vasettha, a mighty trumpeter, makes himself heard, and that without difficulty, in all the Four Directions, even so of all beings that have form or life there is not one that he passes by, but regards all with mind set free, with deep Compassion." Bearing in mind this or some similar utterance of The Teacher, we endeavor, with the greatest intensity of mental effort of which we are capable, to hold our thoughts upon the meaning of the passage; to waken in ourself, as represented therein, the thrill of pity that naturally arises when we see some fellow-life in pain. That thrill of pity once awakened, directed as in our passage to the multitudinous beings caught in the surging whirlpool of Craving, Passion, and Illusion, is to be dwelt on, magnified, purified in our thoughts, always with our ideal as its substratum, with the idea that this definite cultivation of an emotion otherwise only occasional, will open for us the entrance to the Path—the path that

leads to power to help relieve the sorrow of the world; and so, each day we meditate, always at the same time, for such a duration as we are able. At first we find the *words* employed important; also we find that our ability to awaken the thrilling feeling of pity (which is in this case the first Nimitta) varies very much on different days; sometimes it will seem to come almost without an effort, and yet on other occasions we may never get as far as its awakening at all. Another of the invariable effects on the beginner is the arising of a definite distaste for the practice we are engaged in; we find that a very strong persuasion arises that the whole thing is useless; we want at the selected time to do anything else but meditate; we find a tendency to leave off the practice altogether, or to leave it alone till it becomes welcome to our minds once more. When these opposing thoughts are uppermost, moreover, our mind will wander, the Nimitta

will not easily arise, perhaps not at all; we feel convinced that we have not the right method, or the right sort of mind for meditation practices.

Now it is just at the point when, by the arising of these opposing ideas, our progress seems altogether stopped, that we are—despite the difficulty and despite the apparent lack of result—able to do most in the way of overcoming those Five Hindrances which always oppose any attempt to meditate. This is why it is so important *always* to practise at our chosen time, to let no feeling or condition of our affairs interfere; at such times it is better even merely to say the words, were it for a few minutes only, than to give up or to miss the practice of one day.

How long it takes to win to the next stage, the stage in which the Immediate Fruit of our meditation becomes apparent, depends in the first place on the energy and determination with

which we go into and sustain the practice; also on our Kamma, health, and many other things. If, winning to nothing, we give it up at the first appearance of obstacles, letting our fickle minds wander whithersoever they will, then, trying to meditate now and again by fits and starts, we shall never accomplish anything in the matter at all. But if, with silent, brave determination we understand that all our difficulties are only questions that time and determined will can overcome; if we persevere against all obstacles and, even if it take us years, press ever onwards, understanding these obstacles as but the outcome of our bygone lives; if we keep on, then, one day or other, the first real step upon the actual Path will be made. Suddenly, some time when we have awakened and magnified to our utmost that internal overpowering sensation or thrill of pity, suddenly and without a warning our first Immediate Fruit will come; and for,

perhaps an instant only as our minds count time, we shall enter and dwell in the state of the First Jhāna.

Then we shall know, and for the first time understand the truth of what we have read, as words and words only in the sacred books, but never have seen or known. As from the heart of a dark thunder-cloud at night time when nought or but a little of earth or heaven can be seen, suddenly the lightning flashes, and for an instant the unseen world gleams forth in instantaneous light, light penetrating every darkest corner, flushing the clouded sky with momentary glory—so then, at that great moment, will come the realisation of all our toil. No words, no similes, no highest thought of ours can adequately convey that mighty realisation; but then, at that time, we shall know and see; we shall realise that all our life has changed of a sudden, that what of yore we deemed

Compassion—what of old we deemed the utmost attainment that the mind or the life of man can compass—that is ours at last; we have won, achieved, and entered into the Path of which mere words can never tell. As is deep sleep to sudden wakening to day's bright consciousness; as sight's coming to the man born blind; as life from death itself—so, in that instant, dawns for us the moment of attainment. As a flash lighting up the darkest corners of our mental kingdom, revealing, clear and luminous, the wide unconquered empire of the mind, so comes for the aspirant the glorious moment of attainment. Living, as we cannot think of life, yet still with the feeling of self-conscious being, of identity with that one who lived and strove; with mind still reasoning, discerning, he who has attained understands: "At last I have attained." With that knowledge, just as all the heavens start forth into momentary glory at the lightning flash, so is his being

flushed, illumined with an ecstasy of joy past mortal speech or thought. But for an instant only, yet that instant's light—even if never again he could achieve that instant's light—suffices to make new his life, to illumine for him all his future ways. For ever after, he who has so attained sees life with other eyes than heretofore; he knows that, ignorant and uncomprehending as he now still is, once his mind's Vision saw the very meaning and the purpose of existence; for him no more the vain and purposeless wandering here and there, seeking for this or that new object of the sense or thought. He knows there is a meaning and a purpose, vaster than thinking mind can hold, behind, beyond, this petty dream of life; no more can foolish doubt assail him; the Path is his, the Way is opened, the Way that leads to that great Goal once seen afar.

You know how once the king Ajātasattu came to the Exalted One, asking for an answer

to his question as to the Immediate Fruit. Here in this world, he said, men follow many a different worldly way, in this trade or the other, earning their livelihood by this or that profession. Now in all these ways of life, the king maintained, there is for the worker an Immediate Fruit—visible, obvious, dear to him; the wealth that makes him able to live, give help, betimes, to others, win what may be of his heart's desires, maintain his family and parents, dwell in happiness amongst his fellow-men. But of this Religious Life, the king declared, no such Immediate Fruit, pleasant and dear to man, fulfilling his purified desires, could be perceived. Where then, he asked The Teacher, where is the Immediate Fruit of this Religious Life, for the sake of which men in the world live according to the precepts of religion, for the sake of which the Samana leaves house and home and devotes himself to the harder Precepts of the Bhikkhu,

and to the fulfilment of the duties of the Higher Life?

And The Teacher answered him: "Yes, there truly is many a Fruit, immediate and visible to him who wins it, of this Religious Life"; and some of these He taught the king. First the mere *lokika* advantages; the happiness which comes to him who keeps the Ways of Righteousness, who lives in accordance with the Precepts, the peace and the calm joy which spring within him as he sees: "Formerly I lived, unrestrained in appetite, craving for this and that, yet never satisfied; now do I live, by practising this Sīla, calm, restrained, at peace within; this it is well and noble to have done." But, continued The Buddha, there are other, higher, nobler Fruits of the Holy Life; visible, satisfying, to be realised by him who strives; Immediate Fruits of the Higher Life, dearer and sweeter than any fruit of worldly or of virtue's ways. Of those Higher

Fruits the first is the attainment of the First Great Ecstasy; happy is he, in this world and the next, who has attained so far, be it only an instant's seizing on the Fruits of but the First Attainment.

All this so real-seeming life we lead, this earth we walk on, men about us, or the containing Heavens above; all this, and whatsoever we may see, feel, hear or know, is but the phantom, the puppet-show, enacted, as a dream is, by the deep mystery that we term the Mind. He who would free himself from this Illusion; who with clear-seeing Wisdom's eye would rule, and understand, and help—he first must rule in his inner kingdom; he must guide and develop it till he no longer is slave of its desires, but emperor of them all. And he indeed who seeks to make his life worthy of the name of Buddhist; who seeks to follow in the Way The Master walked and taught of old; who seeks to gain the power that comes with Understanding, that

he may in his humble way bring joy, not sorrow to the world—that one, like Dhammasoka in the olden days, first has to conquer these usurping enemies, the Five Great Hindrances, the passions, follies, and weaknesses within. Then, that his rule may be established, like as Asoka engraved on pillar and on rock and cave the Royal Edicts, so must he, on his heart of hearts, inscribe in deep-cut characters his great ideals. If we can do but this; if for The Buddha's Law we will subject our own inalienable empire—then with the certainty of success we may send forth our Sasana over the whole wide world. Each one of us who weakens in the task is weakening the religion; each one who overcomes the tests brings strength and light to it from far beyond Illusion's Veil. By such sustained, enduring, arduous toil, shall we accomplish this first and greatest of our aims; we shall light, in this sleeping land, the old ideal once more, kindle to new and greater vigor the ancient pitying

fervor of our faith. Greater than all other tasks is this, its fruits immediate, timeless, sure; leading not us alone but all—who may thereby hereafter follow the Hidden Way The Buddhas have trodden and have taught—from life and death's unending circle, over the trackless wastes of dire Avijja's ocean, safe, safe, safe, on to the Other Shore!

DEVOTION IN BUDDHISM

THERE are few circumstances more surprising to the student of comparative religion than the fact that, in the pure Buddhism of the *Theravāda*, which constitutes the national religion of Burma, he finds exhibited, both in the scriptural sources of the religion, and in the lives of the people who follow it, an all-pervading spirit of intense *devotion*—a spirit of loving adoration, directed to The Buddha, His Teaching and His Brotherhood of Monks, such as is hardly to be equalled, and certainly not to be excelled, in any of the world's theistic creeds.

To one, especially, who has been brought up in the modern western environment, this earnest devotion, this spirit of adoration, seems almost the last feature he would expect to find in a religion so intellectually and so logically

sound as this our Buddhist faith. He has been accustomed to regard this deep emotion of adoration, as the peculiar prerogative of the Godhead of whatever forms of religion he has studied. So to find it in so marked a degree, in so predominant a measure, in a creed from which all concept of an animistic Deity is absent, appears as well-nigh the most remarkable, as it was the most unexpected feature, of the many strange and novel characteristics of this altogether unique form of religious teaching. That trusting worship, that self-abnegating spirit of devotion in which, in the rest of the great world-religions, the devotee loses himself in thoughts of the glory, power, and love of the Supreme Being of whom they teach, so far from being absent here, whence all thought of such a Being is banished, actually exists in a most superlative degree. It is lavished, indeed, on no hypothesis, on no Being whom none has ever known or seen, but on the

thought of a man, not altogether different from ourselves, who once lived without a doubt on this our earth, and on the Truth He taught, and on the Brotherhood He founded for the continuance of that Dhamma, and for the finding of that Peace whereto He showed the Way.

Wherever else you find that spirit of devotion, it will always be associated with blind faith; with that trusting mental attitude which is characteristic of the earlier stages of our mind's development, the unquestioning faith and love a little child exhibits towards those elders who constitute its small restricted world. To the dawning infantile intelligence, the chief feature of the life, in which it so far can scarcely distinguish betwixt self and not-self, is its own absolute dependence on mother or nurse for the food that constitutes almost its sole desire; to that central all-bestowing figure of its narrow horizon it looks for everything; it deems nurse or mother the omnipotent

dispenser of all human blessings, so far as it can come to aught approaching abstract generalised thought. Then, later, as the ever-recurring marvel of the growth of Mind out of this mere mass of sentiency is enacted, as these early days pass on to childhood, and thought, marshalled to the tune of speech, begins to raise the budding life above the purely animal horizon, the same depending, trusting, all-relying attitude supervenes, directed now to all those elders who form the environment of the dawning mental life. If the moon seem a bright and glorious plaything, the child will ask it for his own, never doubting but that the omnipotent elder could grant the boon if he or she were so disposed. All the child learns is thus assimilated by faith and faith alone; and that indeed is well for us, seeing that without that blind dependence we at that age, lacking the power of spontaneous thinking, could assimilate no thought at all.

This faith or blind devotion, then, constitutes an essential feature of mind-growth; by it, and not by reasoning, by judgment, or discernment, are our earlier concepts moulded. By it do we acquire all our earlier ideas of life, of right and wrong action, of the nature of the world in which we live; by it alone we lay the foundation-stones of the future structure of our mental life. This structure, indeed, is likely to become either a temple, a great and glorious palace, or a sordid hovel, the abode and haunt of ignorance and crime, according as these faith-moulded corner-stones accord the more with truth and understanding, or with false views and the dictates of our elders' ignorance. In that early stage, all that comes must be accepted without thought of questioning; and the mere attestation of an elder suffices to assure the childish mind of the truth of any folly or superstition, howsoever great it may be.

Now the growth of all mankind, of races and of nations, only repeats, on the wider platform of human, racial, or national life, the microcosmic play of the individual development. Rather, perhaps, the truth might better be approximated by exactly the inversion of this statement, that the individual life follows the universal, since our Dhamma teaches us that in reality all life is one, and therefore the true prototype, the real unit, lies not in the individual, but the whole of life at large. However that may be, certain it is that individual and racial life both pass through stages so similar as to be obviously in some way connected; and, just as some human children are more backward than others, and thus much later pass out of this early era of faith-founded knowledge, so is it also with the nations and races of mankind. The further you go back in the history of human civilisation, the more clearly do you see on every hand how, in those

days, what we now term reasoned knowledge was simply unknown, undreamed of by the great masses of mankind; it was achieved only by such few individuals as were wiser and far more developed than their fellows. It is as though our forefathers never passed at all out of this early age of simple-hearted faith, knew naught of questionings, comparisons, decisions, as to right and wrong, truth or falsehood, save what they learned by national and racial tradition. For them, blind faith took that position which now, for us who are grown nearer to human adolescence, is occupied by Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, the fruit and heritage of years of questioning search and of earnest investigation of the facts of life.

For that, of course, is the special feature of the next stage of mental growth which follows mental childhood, the period of adolescence, when, if we rightly win to its attainment, all those earlier faith-laid corner-stones of our

mental fabric are subjected to keenest scrutiny, to most careful testing of their soundness and their strength. Still the great mass of our humanity, of course, never reaches even to this, which is but the second stage of mental growth; most men are still content to take life as they find it, its philosophies and faiths just as their fathers held. But, in our modern age, in our new civilisation of but a hundred years, swiftly indeed those old conditions vanish; year after year more and more men pass from the ranks of human childhood, of the Age of Faith, into those of human adolescence, of the Age of Investigation. Some few, perhaps, already, are passing yet beyond this limit, here and there; in this or that department of our mental life are drawing nearer to full Understanding; to that goal of full mental development, which our Buddhism sets before us as the ultimate ideal of life.

This, then, is the reason why the occidental student in particular, one born and bred at the very heart of this new era of transition—which even in Burma is already so swiftly changing all the old sanctions and the ways of life—finds with surprise this strong element of devotion in the Buddhist Teaching; and he finds it, still more vivid and manifest in Burma's daily life. For him, at first sight, it seems almost a token of degeneration, an instance of atavism, of throwing backwards to an earlier stage of religious development than that most modern, most advanced position to which it is so clearly, so uniquely entitled, by virtue of the logical, the reasoned basis of all its prominent and fundamental Teachings.

If the student has really gained a grasp of the true significance of Buddhism in human thought and development, as also of its place in human history, he will have understood that here in very truth exists a body of religious

teaching not at all like the theistic creeds. For, unlike them, it is suited not only to the Age of Faith, the era of human mental childhood, but also to this new Age of questioning, of Investigation, of mental adolescence, into which at the present day the more cultured members of modern civilisation are entering and have entered. Studying—to gain a right perspective and a correct appreciation of the significance of Buddhism, he must needs have studied—the conditions amidst which Buddhism had its birth in India twenty-five centuries ago, he will have grasped the fact that Buddhism, alike in its internal evidence and structure, and in the history of its origin, takes a place amongst the great world-religions, not unlike that which is held by the whole body of modern science as compared with the logomachies of the Middle Ages in Europe. Historically it takes this unique position, inasmuch as we find in it the admitted ultimate

of Aryan religious thought. For that eastern branch of the great Aryan Race which gave it birth, had reached, even before the days of The Buddha, to heights of religious experience, to depths of religious philosophy and world-view, such as even now is far from being attained by any race amongst the several nations into which the western branch has differentiated. For this fact the reason is not far to seek, for true religion, and most of all the deeper, subtler levels of religious philosophy, is the fruit and outcome only of a life set free from worldly cares; it can only arrive at such great heights, as it had then attained in India, under conditions in which great opportunity for protracted thought and meditation is present; in brief, like all true science, it is rather the offspring of human *leisure* than of a life of human toil. The climatic environment in which the eastern Aryans found themselves, once they had fairly established their colonies

in the fair and fertile plains of middle India, offered opportunities for leisured thought, such as were utterly denied to their northward- and westward-tending kinsmen of the European branch, in their harsher climate and wolf-haunted forests. And this circumstance, combined doubtless with the fact that the eastern Aryans, in their genial climate, grew far more quickly to maturity in the mental sphere, even as they earlier attained to physical fulness of growth, had already, even before The Buddha's time, resulted in a stage of religious development such as far transcended aught that any western race as yet can show. In matters of *material* development, indeed, the Indian Aryans were little more advanced than are their descendants now; but in the deeper things of life, which go together to make up religion, they had travelled further than any race of which our human history tells.

We have seen, in the incomparable achievements of western science and its applications during the past hundred years, what marvellous heights can be attained by the Aryan mind, when once it emerges from the Age of Faith, of mental childhood, and grows to mental youth in an Age of Investigation. In all our records there is nothing like it, the achievement in so short a period of a body of knowledge and power so great. What that wonderful instrument of the keen, clear Aryan mind, thus lately grown to the stature of the manhood in the West, has of late years accomplished in the sphere of the material sciences, all that, and more indeed, had the Aryans of the Gangetic valley accomplished in the vaster, wider empire of religious experience and life.

To all that long era of immense religious activity, to all the long glorious line of Indian sage and saint, The Buddha came as the crown

and greatest glory; His Teaching, as the last achievement of Aryan religious thought and life. Thus it happened, as has been said above, that the student of Buddhist origins finds how the very historical circumstances of the birth of Buddhism mark it at once as the one religion, so far known on earth, which is the offspring, not of the Age of Faith, but of the Age of Understanding; the sole religion known so far, which is stated in the terminology of mental and intellectual, rather than emotional life. What this external evidence of history teaches us concerning it, that also is no less manifest from the internal witness of the Teachings set forth in its sacred sources, the wonderful philosophy, so true and obvious when once we know it, which we find The Master's word expounds. Here is no teaching of blind faith, no shutting of our eyes to the pain, the cruelty, the changefulness of life; no setting aside of the

great problem of suffering as a mystery into which we must not seek to penetrate; no fond and fair belief that all of it is somehow for the best, in that it all was made and still is guided by some great mystic Being whom none has ever known or seen.

In the place of all that fare for human mental infancy, we have the harder and yet strength-building food of adult man; the problem of evil nobly faced and met, with the one Wisdom that can avail to end it. Sorrow exists, is very shadow to all life enselfed; its Cause lies in not-understanding; whence springs Desire; its Cure lies in the undermining of desire, in letting go the love of self for the nobler, greater love of all. What made it? That is in the dark; we do not know, we cannot understand. Why is it so? That question must be met by noble silence only. We do not know, we cannot understand; and when men try to put in words that which

transcends our human knowledge, such words are in reality all meaningless, they bring no help to us; over such mere *views* men ever are at war. What then avails? To realise the Truth; to see how Sorrow reigns, in that our hearts are slave to self; to put an end to all this suffering; to seek the Peace which reigns where Sorrow cannot come. How can this be? How, bound in self-wrought pain, in the transition and illusion of our life, can we, in Ignorance enmeshed, hope to find the Peace Beyond? Because the processes which we describe as "Life," occur in conformity with the Law of Cause-Effect; and so, by ceasing to do evil, to inflict pain on life; by doing good, helping to relieve life's pain; by purifying heart and life, learning the great lesson of its Oneness and our part in it, surely must we presently find Peace, find Sorrow's End even in this sad world most surely, since Causation obtains everywhere throughout its entire realm.

That is the Truth which The Master taught us: so simple and yet so profound; so cutting at the very roots of pain, and wrath, and ignorance; so clear when we have learned it, yet it was so hidden from the searching thought of all the world's great Holy Ones save One. Because Causation reigns; because the Sequence is inevitable; because Good grows to Better, the good seed to further golden crop; because Causation reigns, so must there be that Way of Peace within our very hearts; sure as Causation itself, shines this clear lamp of Hope through Ignorance's night.

That is our Truth. No dream of poet; no imaginary Power that made this aching world of life and yet is merciful; demand for faith we cannot have when once our minds have outgrown infancy. *Wisdom* for *Faith* our Dhamma offers us, the knowledge of the incomparable surety of Nibbana's Peace, if we can turn our hearts from love of self to

love for all. That is our Dhamma, nobly facing all life's facts, and never hiding in a veil of transcendent mystery; certain, sequent, stable, sure; surer its truth than our own life is, for we have dreamed before, and even this our life may be in truth another dream. But that is true and sure, that Dhamma of our Master; truer and surer the more rightly do we comprehend it; our Hope therein is sure, seeing Causation reigns.

Surer than Life It is, since life is but a seeming and becoming; surer than Death It is, for the seed, cabined in earth's close darkness, dies but to live again in greater, sweeter life of leaf, and bud, and bloom, unfolding in the wide, free air and glorious sunlight; and is the life that now is, thrilling in our hearts as this transcendent miracle of thought, the *less* of life, that *it* should perish where that seed-spark of life endures? Deeper and yet deeper, as our minds can attain to measure It, we find

the surety of It grow for us and in us; the deeper our understanding of It, still the surer grows Its Very Truth; and, even then, when with our thought grown deepest, we essay to plumb sheer to Its utter depths, to learn the fulness of It, to attain Its final Truth, even then ever open new gulfs of depth and width past all our fathoming, past all our reach of It, so great is It, so deep, so wide.

The student knows that Buddhism is first and above all else a Gnosis, a Wisdom, a Religion of Understanding, showing the Way of Peace, the Path of Liberation and Salvation, as lying through selfless Love and Knowledge, twin aspects of the same great, final Truth of Life. So, at the first sight of it, that attitude of Faith and of Devotion, which we have seen to be the characteristic of the *earlier* stages of mental growth, seems to the student to be out of place; and its undoubted presence, both in the Teaching of The Master and in the modern

practice, to approach at least to a reversion to the methods and weaknesses of an earlier mental stage. He reads, perchance, the beautiful, ancient Pāli hymn:

> Ye ca Buddhā atītā ca,
> Ye ca Buddhā anāgatā,
> Paccuppannā ca ye Buddhā
> Ahaṃ vandāmi sabbadā!
>
> N'atthi me Saraṇaṃ aññaṃ;
> Buddho me Saraṇaṃ varaṃ
> Etena saccavajjenā
> Hotu me Jāyamangalaṃ!

"To all the Buddhas of the ancient days; To all the Buddhas of all future time; To all the Buddhas of the present age, I offer adoration evermore.

"For me there is no other Refuge; the Buddha is my Refuge—He, the Best! By power of the Truth in these my words, may I attain the Glorious Victory!"

And if, further, he has the priceless opportunity of prosecuting his studies of the Dhamma

not in those western lands where he can learn but from books alone, and where, accordingly, its Teachings seem far off, remote alike in space and time, but in a Buddhist land like Burma, where it becomes, for one who has the wit to understand it, a living power, a supreme reality that sways the lives and ways of multitudes of men—then once again, perhaps, the same feature stands out most prominently, is manifested in the very life of the people before his eyes. He sees how the religious life of the nation centres around the Monastery and round such great religious shrines as the Shwè Dagon Pagoda ; he sees, at some great Pagoda Festival, the worshipping crowds kneeling at the feet of The Master's Image, offering their incense and lights, heaping great piles of tropic flowers before His shrine, and each and all prefacing every act of meditation and of worship with the Formula of the Salutation: *Namo Tassa Bhagavato, Arahato, Sammāsambuddhassa !*

"Glory unto Him, The Exalted Lord, The Holy One, The Utterly Awakened!"

"What, then," he asks himself, "is the meaning of this so obviously fervent and true-hearted Buddhist devotion, whether as found in salutation or in hymn; or, more manifestly yet, in this adoring praise and worship of what is without doubt the truest Buddhist nation in the world? Is it indeed an instance of reversion to an earlier type of religious development, a thing adopted bodily from earlier Indian religious thought—adopted as it stood without that changed significance which The Buddha stamped on so many of the old beliefs and thoughts? Or is it, again, a recrudescent growth of later introduction into Buddhism, an instance of that slow but sure decay of the pristine purity of the religion, such as we find so common in all the long-lived religions, but from which, so far, the *Theravāda* seems so wonderfully to have escaped?"

The answer to these questions, as further study of the Dhamma teaches him, pursues, as is ever the case with Buddhist thought, the Middle Way between the two extremes. Devotion has in very fact a definite and indeed a prominent place in Buddhist life; and it consists of two widely different emotions, a lower and a higher, of which the latter alone may be regarded as the exclusively and characteristically Buddhist type. The first, and of necessity the most prevailing form of it, is just that same emotion of dependence and reliance, on an unseen Guide, of the heart that entertains it; and it finds a place, a very humble one indeed, but still a certain and defined position in the body of Buddhist Teaching as a whole. This is that same unquestioning faith in some being living, the blind belief in some great Power or Person able to hear and aid, which, as we have seen, is typical of the dawning intellectual growth of man. Seeing that this lower form

of devotion constitutes, not only a stage, but an essential stage in a man's mental development; and seeing that the Dhamma was expounded, not only for the more advanced units of humanity who have transcended mental childhood, but for mankind at large, for *every* class of mind—this lower type of devotion is also to be found in it as well as in all the other great religions of the world. But in the Teaching of The Buddha we find that this devotion, instead of taking the foremost place amongst religious ideals and inculcated practices, instead of acting as the cloak of manifold mysteries, as an excuse for the incompatibility of the facts of life with others of the Teachings of the religion, holds only that position to which it is entitled as an indispensable feature of the earlier stages of human mental growth.

As such, we find it in the beautiful *Story of Mattakundali*, the traditional exposition at length of the Teaching summarised in brief in

the second stanza of the *Dhammapada.* Recording the old traditional exposition of this stanza, current in his days in the then centre of all Buddhist learning, the monasteries of Ceylon, the great Commentator tells us how The Master was accustomed, on each morning of His life, to search with inner higher vision over the length and breadth of all the land, to see what human hearts were nigh to grace or insight, so that they needed for their helping only such aid as one who knows the Way can sometimes render to some humbler, lowlier fellow-man. And it thus befell that on a day, as the Commentator with oriental imagery finely puts it, casting the net of His Compassion over the waters of life's ocean, He found therein poor Mattakundali, son of a wealthy but miserly Brāhmana, nigh to the gates of death by reason of his Kamma, but, by that same reason, in the state to profit by a helping hand. The story we all well know,

and here we are concerned in but the point of how, to the dying child, The Master made manifest a glorious apparitional image of Himself; and how the boy, dying there in solitude, turned to this Form with wondering, with unquestioning devotion, losing all sense of fear and suffering in the thought, that surely this Holy One could aid him and bring him peace. With that assurance in his heart, the potent life-determining dying thought grew calm, so that Mattakundali, dying on the earth, came to rebirth amidst the heavenly glories—was reborn in one of the bright Heavens of Form—although the immediate cause of such high happiness was but a single act of adoration, namely the child's reliance on the Master's power to help.

This little story is an excellent example of the place held by the lower, common form of devotion in Buddhism; excellent as indicating at the same time both the power ascribed to

this type of devotion, and the close limitations Buddhist Teaching sets on its power to help us and to change our destinies. For, be it noted, that act of worship was, as it were, only the *determining*, the *immediate*, cause of that fortunate rebirth, in that the overwhelming flood of adoring thought could calm the usually trembling death-consciousness, and so, as it were, pave the immediate way for the operation of past meritorious Doing, the latter being the remoter, and yet more real cause.

But, as we all know, the aim and goal that Buddhist Teaching lays before us is by no means the gaining of such heavenly birth as Mattakundali attained. Such birth may be regarded—and in the case in hand the view applies—as a *nursery* for the child-intelligence; a life of peace and happiness, in the midst of which the dawning mind grows to greater heights of spiritual strength which enables it, in later lives on earth, better to face the

pain and suffering which are at once so characteristic of our human life, and as such, sure guides or rather goads, to bring us to seek out the Path of Peace. But so rich in joy those heavenly mental realms are, and so great the length of life therein, that few amongst their denizens ever can win the comprehension of the Sorrow, or yet the Changefulness or Illusion dominant in life. So that in them is little opportunity for realising the truly Buddhist aim, the finding of the Path of Selflessness, whereof the first step lies in abnegation of all such personal desire, as the heavenly birth promotes.

Thus we may define this lower species of devotion, this mere blind faith in what is high and holy, as able, indeed, when it finds support in Meritorious Doing (but not otherwise), to conduce to lives of heavenly or earthly happiness, to afford, as it were, a period of rest and leisure for the growing but still undeveloped

mind. Why this should be the case we well can see, who understand the teaching of Causation, as that second stanza of the *Dhammapada* calls to mind. In the devoted heart as in the mental child-life, there is firm and never-wavering assurance of the power of that devotion's object to give aid to us, to render grace and help. "*All that we are*," to quote our *Dhammapada* stanza, "*All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thought, made up of our thought: If a man speaks or acts with holy thought, then Joy shall follow him, sure as his shadow, never leaving him.*" The world in which we find ourselves, that is, *our* world is but the wrought and moulded outcome of our thought in bygone lives. Given the moving power of Meritorious Act behind it, it will build for us lives filled with joy and happiness, but shaped and moulded just as our thought dictated. The dream, the ideal of heaven,

creates for us the very heaven whereof we dreamed, if behind the thought there be sufficient *Puñña*, the life-giving Doing, the Good Kamma, which alone can thrill the dream to vivid life.

Such is the power, and such the limitation, of devotion of this lower type. It can, in brief, bring happiness if vitalised by Righteous Doing, but it is impotent to help us to enter and walk upon the Way of Peace. And if, because the Dhamma was enounced for the benefit of all humanity, of whom the majority are still in the childhood of mental growth, if in its lower, earlier Teaching we find that devotion still holds a place, we still can see how even that very usage of it is designed to pave the way for greater, nobler thought. Throughout The Master's Teaching, we find everywhere the same idea presented; the idea, namely, that *only* our own Right Act can serve to help us in the end; the constant attempt to wean the

growing mind, from the dependence of that earlier stage of childhood, to the realisation that our Hope, our Light, our Way, lies in reality *within ourself*. We may hear, indeed, the words of the Teaching of a Very Buddha; but they can avail us only to the extent to which we follow their advice. "Be ye Lamps unto yourselves; look for Refuge to yourselves, seeking no other Refuge." The thought that Refuge lies in Truth alone, is the fundamental dictum of The Master to whomsoever seeks to put an end to all this Cycle of Becoming and of Suffering and to find the Way of Peace.

And thus we come to the second, the higher and peculiarly Buddhist thought and attitude, to which the name Devotion can be applied. As the child grows older, Thought begins to take the place of Faith. No longer accepting with perfect trustfulness, all that the elders or parents tell it, it begins to *question* things, to

endeavor to investigate; it begins, in short, to think its own thoughts, rather than, as heretofore, to take all its concepts ready-made. With the dawning comprehension of life resulting from this changed attitude, it ceases to be naught but a mental mirror wherein the thoughts of its environment are reflected. Beginning to think for itself, it passes into the period of mental adolescence; and with this awakening of independent thought the old blind faith soon disappears, at least with those more progressed individuals who in past lives have already gone through the childhood stage.

Here, for our present human development, the parallelism which so far has obtained between the individual and the racial development appears to cease; for there always exist some few rare minds already far ahead of the general development. Such pass onwards, individually, from this stage of mental youth,

this Age of Questioning, to the final stage of full maturity, the Age of Wisdom, of full Understanding. But as yet the mass of even the most civilised of races can scarcely be said to have advanced even to adolescence.

To that full stage of mental growth, in matters of worldly knowledge, we may regard the greatest of mankind as having more or less completely attained. In the world of literature a Shakespeare, in the sphere of science a Newton, a Spencer, and a Maxwell, have reached so far in one or more of the departments of mental life. Of such are the master-minds of all humanity, the leaders of civilisation; and in our present era of transition the number of these great thinking ones is being added to each day. Such progress at present is abnormal, is indeed far beyond the growth and the attainment of the body of mankind, who, as we have seen, are lagging still, even in the most progressed of

races, on the verge of mental infancy, are but slowly passing from the Age of Faith. So, such attainments as a Newton or a Spencer have reached can, in our present age, be won only by the hardest work and the intensest application; and, even then, such mental manhood, such maturity as these may have reached are found, as has been said, only in one, or in a few departments of mental action.

But, from our Buddhist point of view, we may regard all these attainments, in respect of merely worldly art and science, as being simply *side-shows*, specialised realms of knowledge only collaterally connected with the *real* advancement, the *true* maturity, that is, maturity of *general* development; maturity in respect of those deeper things of life which we sum up in the one word Religion. *True* progress, basic to the whole field of mental life, is what we Buddhists term attainment of the Paths; and this because the more worldly

knowledge, the specialised attainment in respect of some one, or some few mental kingdoms only, dies with the death of the individual who has attained to it, so far, at least, as he himself is concerned therewith. Truly, its results, especially in this age when the general wisdom has so far advanced that the wise publish their discoveries broadcast throughout the world, remain for the benefit of mankind at large; this is the special virtue and the boon such sort of mental achievement wins. None of us are Newtons, even in process of becoming, of that we may be sure, at least so far as *this* life is concerned. None of us, therefore—to touch but one department of the many that that master-mind was master in—could of our own intelligence infer from an apple's fall the Law of Gravitation. But, since the actual Newton not only made that great inference and the consequent application, but published his discovery for the benefit of all, the merest tyro

amongst us can apply, can use the principle he discovered; thus, if lost for Newton as a being, the knowledge still remains to benefit mankind.

But the deeper, the more spiritual attainment summed up in the word Religion, the attainment of growth upon the holy Path leading to Insight, Understanding, to the Peace, to Sorrow's End, or that Higher Wisdom, is no mere side-show; it is basic to the whole great field of life itself, of that no smallest gain is ever lost to the being that wins it, or, for that matter, is ever lost to life at large. Such growth is fundamental, basic, it implies the fulfilment of the very Hope, the meaning of our life. In respect of that deep wisdom, we to-day may fairly place ourselves as having passed out of the Age of Faith; as standing now somewhere within the limits of the Age of Investigation; and our great hope now lies in being able a little to move forwards in our present life; to attain, in the life that lies

before us, a little nearer to the full maturity of life. We in the Buddhist term are *Sekha*, students or learners, trying so to understand and to apply to our own lives the greatest body of the deeper wisdom ever given to the world, that the life of which we form an integral part may come a little nearer to the Peace.

What, then, is the manner of *devotion* that, for us thus situated in respect of the deeper growth, can serve to help us further on the Path? This is the specifically Buddhist form of it. We have seen how the earlier form consists in blind faith only; we have seen how necessary that is to the undeveloped mind; but, since to-day we are endeavoring to *investigate*, to think for ourselves and to apply our thought to life, we obviously have passed beyond the age when mere blind faith could help us; such, for us, who have reached adolescence, would be a retrogression, not an advance.

We are here concerned with finding, with progressing on, the Inward Path; and, as we all know, that sort of progress has been well summed up as "*making pure the Mind*". How can devotion help in that direction? and, if not the old type, mere blind devoted Faith, what fashion of it here can help us as we stand?

To take the latter question first, the Buddhist answer is that it is not Faith indeed, so far as faith is blind, unreasoning, based on no principle or fact in life, but only on our hope and our desire. Rather it is the maturer Love, the devotion that comes in the train of Understanding; the true heart's adoration that springs from within us when we have gained a little self-mastery; when, this delusion of the self seeming no longer all our hope in being, we begin to understand the value of self-sacrifice, when we attain some glimpse of the tremendous meaning of the Love that has for us resulted in the knowledge of the Law we have.

So long as self alone seems of importance, it appears to us of little value that another should have given all His life, even the all of many lives, for the sake of helping life at large to find the Peace. Then, when self rules supreme, it seems derogatory to its glory that we should kneel in adoration of whatever greatest being has existed, whether on earth or in the heavens beyond. But, with the progress of our heart's cleansing, understanding how in that thought of self lies the root-cause of all the pain of life which now we seek to help to end, with that progression comes the understanding of the utter worthlessness, nay, more, the very evil of the self-thought; and yet, to each of us, how difficult the least poor act of self-renunciation seems! Knowing that, and setting beside our knowledge of the sacrifice which this discovery of the Path involved for One, the holiest and greatest of our human kind, *our* paltry efforts in that same direction, we turn

with shame from the thought of it, so mean and poor do our greatest efforts seem when so compared.

Thus the devotion we should cultivate springs from no less significant a thought than that of our own true place in life's progression; as compared with the heights of selflessness won by the Holy and the Great of old. Seeing, by the clear logic of the Law, how self is the cause of all the pain of life; seeing how difficult for us is each poor feeblest act of sacrifice of self, our hearts are filled with wonder and with love at the thought of one who could give *all* that men hold dear, not in the sure knowledge of success, but only in the Hope of finding a Way of Peace for all. That is the sort of Faith, of Love, of Devotion, that can help us on, and why? Because it means another conquest over self-hood; a further achievement of the deeper, vaster, universal Love.

Without it, without this reasoned sure devotion to the Hope that now is guiding our life's ship over the darkling waters of the ocean of existence, we can never win the fire, the power, the earnestness which alone can forward our high aim. Brightly on our mental horizon, and more brightly yet, as one by one the mists of self-hood roll aside, shines the beacon-light upon the Further Shore; the reasoned Understanding: "Once has One achieved, and still on earth His Light is shining, to guide the lives of all that lift up eyes to see." Athwart the darkling waters of life's ocean, marking the Path that each must travel to the Peace, gleams clear the Way that that beacon-fire shows. By Understanding of the Truth He left to us, by comprehension of Causation's Law, we may *guide* indeed our bark of life, straight and sure on the gleaming roadway marked on the waves by that still distant beacon-fire. But all the guidance of our intellect applied, aided

albeit by all our knowledge of that very Truth, the Law The Master found for us—it all were useless, unless we could find the motive power to drive our ship. That power, that fire within the furnace of our hearts, is Devotion which we must cultivate. We know how, if we wish for bodily strength, we must practise lifting heavy weights, or in some way *using* the set of muscles that we wish to strengthen. Just so with Thought. It is not enough once to have seen that "such-and-such thought is good, beneficent, tending to ease the bitter agony of life," and, having so seen, to set aside the potent thought, or never think of it again. We must *use* it, practise thinking it, make, in respect of it, Saṅkhāras more and more potent till it has become truly a living fire within us, certain, all-overcoming, sure. Therefore it is not alone those lowly hearts who, yet in mental childhood, find in blind faith new mental strength, that need to kneel before The

Master's shrine, to offer humble gifts of light, and flower, and scent. We, too, need that, not less than those our humbler human brethren, but vastly more; for the power of self is still upon us, and only a right grasp of our ideal can antidote its poison in our hearts. We, too, need recitation of the Namaskara; but our adoration must be paid, not to a Person, for in truth all personality is but a dream, but to our Heart's Ideal. We, too, can find ever new strength in kneeling at The Master's shrine; but we must understand our worship rightly, and build a fitting shrine in our own lives, cleansing our hearts till they are worthy to bear that Image in their inmost sanctuary of love. And, lastly, we also need to offer gifts upon that altar daily; but gifts, not of these swiftly waning lights, these dying flowers of earth or evanescent incense-scents. Our gifts must be in deeds of love; of sacrifice and self-surrender to those about us must be our daily offerings

in worship of the Exalted Lord. Making His life our pattern, our ideal, we must strive to be His followers not in name alone, but must so rule our hearts and lives that men may understand the meaning of that noblest holiest life that ever human being lived; how it has the power to call us and to conquer, until Love's Empire shall have spread through all the world.

BUDDHIST SELF-CULTURE

The teaching of the higher evolution set forth by The Buddha has as its chief characteristic the pursuance of what is termed in Buddhist phraseology the Middle Way, or, as we might otherwise express it, the golden mean between all extremest views. The Middle Way itself is indeed concerned only with fixing the standard of life for the follower of The Buddha; it consists in the avoidance, on the one hand, of the extreme of self-torture, of unnecessarily ascetic practices; and on the other, of the life of the worldly man, altogether given over to self-indulgence and the seeking after pleasures of the senses. But all through that Teaching we find everywhere the same principle of the Middle Way; and nowhere is

this more marked than in the Buddhist attitude to the question of predestination or free will.

Teaching as it does that the character and destiny of any being are, with one exception, absolutely determined for any given moment, and are the necessary resultants of the long line of mental doings which constitute his whole past, Buddhism appears at first sight to teach fatalism, determinism, pure and simple. But it is an equally prominent part of Buddhist doctrine that, however determinate, for the present moment, is the Kamma, the character and destiny of a given being, yet that being may, if he has but wisdom and knows how to utilise it, alter his whole future in whatever direction pleases him. In other words an intelligent being, such as man, is, for the immediate moment, ruled by his destiny; he is bound by all the forces of his past to react in a definite fashion to any given set of circumstances that may arise. But over the future

he is himself ruler—within very wide limits indeed; he can, if he have knowledge, so profoundly alter, by dint of culture, his own character, as to produce results obviously manifest even in the short span of this life. This circumstance is, of course, at the root of all education; and the life of a George Stephenson is a living example of the profound effect on character and destiny which a man can bring about by dint of mental culture.

Thus we may put the Buddhist position as to the free will or predestination discussion by saying that a man is determined for the immediate present, but that he has choice as to his way in life as regards the future.

Now all Buddhism is simply a system of culture, directed to the one end of lessening the suffering of life. According to this religion, all evil, all suffering, all that opposes our free progress towards the Peace beyond All Life, lies only in *Avijja*, in Nescience; or, to put it in

terms of the human life, the true source of evil lies in Ignorance—in not knowing, not understanding, the nature or the meaning of life. In us this Nescience is said to have three great manifestations—Craving, Hatred, and Self-delusion; of these we may regard the latter as the most fundamental, the others being merely necessary outcomes of it. It is because we look not on life, as being what in fact it is, one great unity, but as divided into self and the not-self, that we entertain thoughts of Craving and of Hate. So Buddhism, going to the root of the matter, directs our attention to the undermining of this fundamental delusion of the permanent self-hood; and all its long course of self-discipline is simply directed to this one end.

That course of discipline is conveniently divided into three sequent steps: the Discipline in *Sīla* or Conduct; in *Samādhi*, or Mental Attainment; and in *Pañña*, the Higher

Wisdom. The first of these, Sīla, includes both the active and the negative sides of moral culture; the negative being the five prohibitions —not to kill, steal, commit impurity, lie, or use intoxicants; the positive being Charity or universal love. This Sīla, simple though it may sound in words, and well though we all know the nature of its injunctions, is the essential preliminary; there is no *Samādhi*, no mental Oneness, to be obtained without it. And for those who are weak in it to undertake the practices of mental culture leading to Samādhi, in the case of most of them, would involve a serious risk of grave mental alienation. Similarly, it is only by Samādhi—rightly directed and used—that *Pañña*, the Higher Wisdom, Insight, may be gained.

I propose to set before you a rough outline of certain of the practices whereby this Samādhi is to be won, and must therefore first endeavor to make clear the meaning of the word. There

is, unfortunately, no one word in English which conveys the meaning, the fact being that in western countries the practices which create the link whereby its attainment is registered in the mind are but little known. The word has been variously translated Mental Concentration, Meditation, Ecstasy, and so forth; the last, Ecstasy, being perhaps the most nearly accurate rendering of the meaning. But, whilst the conscious recollection of the attainment of Samādhi is rare in the West, we are of course not to understand that the attainment itself is lacking. In one direction many varieties of what is called "Religious Experience"—the attainment of a more or less high Samādhi—is not only relatively common, but also leaves behind it a more or less distorted memory of some great happening; whilst what we call the inspiration of genius is in very many cases the direct outcome in thought of an attainment of Samādhi itself forgotten. Even in the more

active functioning of the mind in this our waking state, Samādhi in a sense may be said to exist, but, in this case, its continuance is for exceedingly short periods of time only.

Perhaps the best way of explaining what Samādhi is will be to use the familiar Buddhist simile of the lamp flame. The mind or thought is said in Buddhist phrase to be *Pabhassara*—having the nature of light, or, as we should put it, it is a radiant form of energy. Likening, then, the mind of man as a source of this radiant thought to the flame of a lamp, we are taught by Buddhist psychology that, in the ordinary man, the flame is not steadily burning—not even for the duration of a single second of our time. The emission of the thought-energy is said to alternate between the full flaming of the lamp and well-nigh complete extinction, as though the lamp were flickering; and this flickering is said to occur at a very great rate indeed—the time-terms are

unfortunately very vaguely expressed, but the rate must be of the order of millions per second—so that what we call a single thought in reality consists of an exceedingly large effort of consciousness, each alternated with a lapse into almost complete unconsciousness. Apart from the rapid flickering of the flame, the flame may be regarded—still in the ordinary man—as being constantly blown about as a whole; every incoming sense-impression, each wave of sense or of emotion or interest that passes through us, is like a wind which blows about the flame of our mind.

Now it is just—to continue our simile—by this light of the mind that we live and know. It naturally follows that, the more our flame is blown about by the winds of sense and passion and interest, and the more profound is the plunge into unconsciousness between the flickers of the lamp, the less accurate will be the view which we shall obtain of the world

revealed to us by this so intermittent light. Before we can truly judge the nature of the world, the light, the mind's light by which we see that world, must be brought to burn steadily; else we must always continue to see distorted shadows cast by the flickering flame and wind-blown light, and never catch a glimpse of the reality about us.

And this Samādhi—this steady burning of the flame of life—and all the practices that lead thereto, are designed to the sheltering, even though it be but momentary, of the flickering flame; it is only in its steady-burning ardor that the higher wisdom, the true understanding of the Oneness of Life that makes for Peace, can be won. Just as we may use an earthly light to aid us in the doing of good deeds, so is the acquirement of high and holy knowledge; or, on the other hand, just as we employ it for the commission of crime, or the perversion of our minds by studying foolish literature, so can the

light of Samādhi itself be employed either for good or for evil; it is just here that the danger lies for one who gains Samādhi without first submitting himself to a long and careful moral and mental training.

There are two chief methods by which Samādhi may be won: these are *Samatha* and *Vipassana*, what we may term Quietism, and Insight, Penetration. In the first, the attention is aroused to the utmost stretch of tension possible, but it is directed, not towards the outer world, but inwards on the mind itself. The idea is to keep intensely watchful, and to beat down, as it begins to arise, every incoming message of sense, every wave of recollection or emotion; just to watch and wait, permitting yourself to entertain no thought but watchfulness. If Samatha happens to be the best method for you, then one day, when you are doing this practice, you will suddenly, as it were, wake up—wake to a mental state

indefinitely more intense and active than that in which we normally function. That is obtaining Samādhi by means of Quietude.

The other method, *Vipassana*, Insight or Penetration, is exactly the opposite. Here, instead of keeping the mind fixed in attention only, and suppressing every thought of the outer, the objective world, you fix your attention upon some thought itself, and keep it so fixed as long as possible, bringing it back, every time it breaks away, to the particular subject you have chosen as your mind's dwelling-place. Of the two methods this latter is much the easier for the occidental mind; for the simple reason that all our mental training is on lines pertaining to Vipassana, that complete mental quietude of the other method is exceedingly difficult for us Westerns to attain. The fruits also are in a sense different: in Quietude, what we are doing is, as it were, just sheltering our lamp, and accordingly when

it burns steady its light will be of one or other nature, accordingly as the fuel fed to it in our past lives has been of one sort or another; in Insight the Samādhi attained will be the complete and clear understanding of the underlying law, the inherent nature of the particular object of our meditation. A Newton, watching the fall of his apple, gets Samādhi on the fact of its falling; he himself, very likely, has no clear recollection, on his return to normal consciousness, of having attained to any beyond the normal mental state. That is, for lack of a bridge, of a path between the two realms of consciousness, the waking mind is simply unable to remember anything of that experience itself, just as a man, newly fallen asleep, cannot in his dream remember the more vivid consciousness of the waking state. But what he does carry over from that state is *the resultant in the mind;* and so we have the discovery of gravitation. For this is the nature of Samādhi

when directed to any fact, that the mind attaining it perceives ultimately, not the fact, but the law, the truth underlying that fact. It is as though by Samādhi on a thing you could become that thing itself, and hence see clearly the interior nature of it.

Now it is only, as has been implied, the *right* use of this power of Samādhi that can lead to the goal of the Buddhist life. If we can attain Samādhi in respect of either the transitoriness, the suffering, or the absence of reality in all that we know as life, the fruits of that sort of Samādhi are Right Ecstasy, the Higher Wisdom which leads to Peace. As we have seen, it is in the end to the delusion of separateness—the belief in an immortal individual self within us, apart from other life—that Buddhism attributes all the evil in the world. But it unfortunately happens that it is just this sort of Samādhi which is the most difficult to obtain, for the simple reason that

most of our mental elements have, in arising, been contaminated by one or other of the Three Forms of Nescience—Craving, Hatred, Self-delusion. If, for example, a man unprepared by long training stumbles, as it were, into Samādhi, so vast is the mental universe in which he finds himself, so intense and clear, in comparison to what we know of thought, is his mental functioning, that he is liable to become altogether unbalanced; to imagine that he is God, or to become in some direction or other intensely vain and self-laudatory. And so attaining, so doing Samādhi on his own greatness, eternity, or what not, is indefinitely worse for that being than never attaining Samādhi at all. For Kamma, the reproductive force which exists in thought, whereby our minds and worlds are builded, is the more intense—that is the more active—the nearer to Samādhi the mind is, which sets it in motion. As it is the I-making

faculty in thought which is the principal element in earth-binding Kamma, it is better, from the point of view of the Buddhist, who seeks liberation from this Kamma, never to attain Samādhi at all than to attain it in respect of the self-hood; as the rebirth-causing Kamma produced by even a moment of Samādhi is as potent as that which, in our vastly less active normal waking state, could be made by the selfish thought of whole years of life.

As the bulk of our mental elements from past lives are so largely component of self-hood, it becomes of prime importance that before starting on the practices leading to Samādhi, we should undertake some form of mental culture which leads to the subversion of the I-making elements. To this end the Buddhist, before attempting to attain Samādhi itself, enters on a preliminary training known as Right Recollectedness (*Sammāsati*). The object of this practice is twofold—first, to

suppress the existent self-forming elements in the mind; and, secondly, to link up in a more or less continuous stream the divers items of his mental life. This practice is protective, it can be done at all times, and in fact greatly enhances one's powers of memory and observation, and it is therefore perfectly safe and most advantageous for anyone to do. It consists of sitting, as it were, alert and watchful at the mind-door, watching every sensation, perception, memory, or thought as it arises, and inhibiting the self-idea from seizing on that particular thought. You watch, and you record on your mind; and you do not permit the ideas of craving, hatred, self-hood to come in. Suppose, for example, you are walking; you think: "There is a lifting of the right foot, a leaning forward of the body, the foot is set to the ground," and so on, letting only quite impersonal thoughts arise, but carefully watching and making a mental record of what you are doing.

To put it in other words, you concentrate your whole attention on whatever act, bodily or mental, that you happen to be engaged in, but as though the being's actions you are considering were no more of yourself than are those of any other man. Each time you make a slip—and that, at first, is very frequently—you pull up; recall the thought about which you thought "I," or "mine," and think of the associated action or thing: This is not I, this is not mine, there is no self herein. Thus you produce, in respect of that particular thought, very powerful associated thoughts which tend to neutralise it.

Very much of the Buddhist mental training depends on the power we have of altering certain classes of thoughts by producing in respect of them powerful associated tendencies in a new direction. Suppose, for example, a man is irritable, easily vexed over trifling matters. That is the form of Ignorance called

Hatred; it is a great obstacle to all high attainment. The man so troubled, if he be a Buddhist, sets out to overcome that failing by producing, in respect of the objects which commonly arouse his irritability, powerful associated thoughts of Love—the mental opposite. Say certain persons commonly irritate him; it will generally be found that their mental images are associated in the mind with some careless or foolish action towards him on the part of those persons. As there exists this powerful tendency of thought to make links, to form large groups in which all the associations are connected on to the central image, whenever the mere image, whether physical or mental, of those persons rises in the mind, there rise also those ideas of irritation, of all the causes for irritation that person has given him. Taking, then, the image of those selfsame persons who annoy him, the irritable man, when each day he commences his day's mental practice,

directs, with the whole intensity of intention at his disposal, thoughts of love towards that image. Thus he makes a very powerful set of mental elements of Tendencies, full of thoughts of well-wishing and love, associated with the image of those persons. Then, next time that image arises, there rise, as before, the associated thought-elements of hatred into consciousness; but there also arise those powerful tendencies of love which the meditation built up; one cannot entertain simultaneously thoughts both of hatred and of love towards the same image; so, before long, the practitioner masters his irritability by love.

The method of *Sati*—of watching and recording—may also be applied to the same problem. For, think why it is that we entertain thoughts of hatred, of annoyance, of dislike. It is really only because we imagine that the object of our dislike is a being essentially other and apart from and opposed to ourselves. Suppose, for

instance, you are in a boat on a river, and you see another boat coming down the stream and threatening to collide with you and upset you. If you see another man in that boat you at once get very angry with him; not improbably you waste precious time and energy in stating your opinion of him; you abuse him for his carelessness in thus risking both your lives. But if there is *no* person there; if the boat is empty? Then you do not get angry at all; it is only children and the mentally unsound who get angry with *things*. You realise that it is the force, the flow of the river, that causes the threatened collision; that it depends on your efforts, and yours alone, to get out of danger; and the energy you might have wasted in being angry and saying things if there were a person in the other boat you now spend on securing your safety.

Now, once you arrive at the mental position aimed at by the Right Recollectedness practice,

it is just as in the latter case that you look on all the world. In the light of the higher wisdom there is no such thing as a true *persona* at all; the boats of life are empty, every one. Each is but a given set of mental tendencies, urged by a given portion of the life-stream through a myriad lives. When, then, a person falls athwart of your life, threatening danger, you do not get angry with him; you recognise that there is really no "him" to get angry with; but that the forces that built up your respective lives are now in train for a disaster. You keep your temper, and so have the more strength to avoid the threatened collision.

On similar lines, just another such application of Right Recollectedness, runs the method prescribed by The Master to a certain monk who was angered with another, and came to Him to complain of that intractable one's abuse. "With what, Brother, art thou angered?" asks The Buddha. "Is it the hair of that one's

head"—and so through the thirty-two component structures of the Form-group—"or with his sensations, his perception, memories, thoughts?" So soon as you begin to apply the Sati-analysis, you find there is nowhere anything to get angry with.

When a man has for some time practised this Right Recollectedness, he finds he has acquired a state of mental poise, of firmness of balance, that is not to be obtained in any other way. Then, and not till then, is it safe for him to go on to those other practices which lead to Samādhi in the various wider realms of thought to which reference has been made.

In conclusion I would wish to impress upon you that you must not confuse progress into the more active states of consciousness with progress on the Path that leads to Peace. Samādhi, rightly directed to the transitoriness and so forth of life, may indeed bring us that Higher Wisdom which constitutes progress on

the Path; but the direction, as it were, of that Path lies not in the plane of our life at all—it is as though at right angles to it; a new direction altogether. The true path-making consciousnesses are those that tend to the recognition of the great fact that Life is One; that there is no separation between us and our fellows save what our own ignorance makes. We may indeed, through Samādhi, win, even in this life, to wider and more glorious realms of being, levels of consciousness, than here we know; but, if such attainment should result in the exaltation of our self-hood, the magnification of our "I," then we have done harm far greater than many lives of worldly ignorance could result in. And, on the other hand, every least act, here in this our world, which tends to abnegation of the self—each deed of love and pity and helpfulness we do—is another stepping-stone we have laid in the shallows of life, over which we may presently pass to life's Further

Shore of Peace. To give up living for this false mirage of the self; to understand our life as but a part of all life's unity; to live as far as we may, for the practical realisation of that unity—that is the real object of all Buddhist Culture, whether it fall under the head of Conduct, or Samādhi or the Higher Wisdom. To realise the Oneness of life, and live accordingly—that is the aim of every practice of the Buddhist Culture of the Mind.

KAMMA

Before beginning and without an end,
  As space eternal, and as surety sure,
Is fixed a power divine which moves to good;
  Only Its laws endure.

One of the most important of the doctrines of the Buddhist religion is that which relates to the Law of Kamma; the teaching, namely, that the lives and destinies of men, and of all living creatures, are fashioned in accordance with a definite law of Nature, and are the outcome only of causes set in motion in the past by the being who experiences these effects. It is a doctrine of especial importance for us to consider, first, because the purport of this doctrine of Kamma is largely misunderstood here in Burma—a misapprehension which has given rise to many a weakness in the national character; and secondly, because the right

comprehension of that Law is one of the keys to all success in life.

The misapprehension to which I have referred, lies in the wholly incorrect assumption that a man's life on earth is as it were predetermined for him by the Kamma which he inherits from his bygone lives; and that no man has the power to depart, even by a hair's breadth, from the path in life which his past has prepared for him. It is owing to it also, and to the wrong view of life that results from it, that so much of Burmese energy is frittered away in the foolishness of astrology and of magic, in attempts to lift the veil of futurity, to change one's luck by spells, or to discover hidden treasure by similar means. So it is that when some sudden misfortune falls upon a Burman, he, deeming that he is now reaping the inevitable penalty of bygone misdeeds, abandons at once that vigorous effort which alone could save him; and thereafter,

instead of setting to work to build again his fallen fortunes, lives idly hoping that his destiny may change again, for the good this time. So also is it with many a noble movement set on foot in Burma, as the hundreds of ephemeral Societies founded for this or that good purpose, and collapsing ere a year has passed, bear witness. At first, vast interest and excitement: strenuous effort on the part of the promoters to carry out their objects; and then so soon as those obstacles which exist in every walk in life appear, that good work is abandoned by the very promoters themselves. The times do not appear to them to be ripe for the movement; and all these obstacles, instead of spurring them to new and greater efforts, seem to your countrymen clearly to demonstrate that Fate itself is opposing their endeavors; and so they abandon that good work, even though it be on the very threshold of success. It is the chief

difficulty that you will find here in this work to which you have set yourselves, the chief obstacle in the way of every conceivable reform in Burma. And yet it is not only a belief altogether at variance with the Buddhist doctrine of Kamma, but one specially pointed out in the Buddhist Scriptures as a false belief.

For Kamma is indeed the power which makes or mars the life, the works, the destinies of man. It is true that every living being save the Arahan himself lives as the Law of Kamma shall determine; and in each moment of his life he follows the good or evil way, works or is idle, lives happily or in sorrow, as his destiny determines. But this necessitarian view is only half the truth; and as we all know, a half-truth is often more powerful for evil than deliberate falsehood, for the half-truth lives by virtue of the truth it contains, while falsehood is by its very nature destined to a speedy end.

It is, then, to the complementary part of this half-truth that we need specially to devote attention; and to do this, we need only consider the very derivation of the word itself. For this Kamma, looked upon in Burma as Nemesis, as an inevitable necessity from which no man may escape, comes from the Pali root *kara*, the Sanskrit *kri*, both meaning action, work; and as it is used in Buddhist technicology, the word means at once Doing and the Thing Done, and thence, the power whereby an action is performed. And this Doing is to be regarded, not as the physical function which may accompany or result from a mental act, but as the mental act itself.

Kamma in Buddhist philosophy therefore means three things, according to the moment at which we regard it. It means, first, the performance of a mental action, whether that gives rise to external movement or to speech, or not. Secondly, it is applied to the

effects of past action, as, in producing a definite mental state or environment. And thirdly, it means that force whereby the past action, regarded as a cause, gives rise to the state in question, which is its effect. To make this clear by the common analogy of the physical text-books exhibiting the transmission of energy, in which a number of billiard balls are placed in a groove, touching one another: A light blow on a ball at the end of the line, after a definite short period of time, results in the motion of one at the other end, whilst the intervening balls do not perceptibly move. The blow is comparable to the mental act. The resultant movement of the terminal ball corresponds to the effect of this act in producing a definite change in the position of that ball. And the energy transmitted without apparent effect on the intervening balls, corresponds to Kamma regarded as the force whereby the ultimate effect is produced.

It must here be borne in mind that the whole sequence covered by the term Kamma is purely a sequence of mental functionings; or, in other words, this doctrine of Kamma is the application to the mental and moral worlds of the Law of the Conservation of Energy. At the same time, however, it must be remembered that, from the Buddhist point of view, all that we are and know and perceive is also only the outcome of our mental state. If a man, after partaking of indigestible food, goes to sleep, he will in the majority of cases be afflicted with terrible dreams; that is to say, by reason of the wrong action of overeating, his mind will create about him a horrible environment, so that in his dream he may imagine himself to be pursued by some fearful spectre, or to be falling from a precipice, or some similar unpleasant thing. So long as the nightmare lasts, it will appear to him that the world he is in—that is to say, the state of his

environment—is a thing apart from him, a world external over which he has no control. But, as soon as he is awakened, he sees clearly that the whole of his dream, spectre or precipice, and the time and spatial extension of his universe, the fear he suffered, the attempts he made to escape from whatever terrified him—he sees that all these things, once he is wakened out of his dream, then fall into their right perspective as merely functionings of his own mind.

And the Buddhist teaching, the Buddhist view of this Universe wherein we live our waking lives, is that this also is a dream; that this also is the outcome of our past action, even as the nightmare is understood by the awakened man to be but the natural effect of the food he has taken. All life is but a dream—a dream more intense, more seeming-lasting, if you will, than any vision of the night; but still a dreaming, an illusion, wherein all that

appears, this wide space and the duration of time, and sun and moon and star and all the manifold conditionings of life, are outcome of our character, the total of the outcome of our bygone thoughts, words, deeds; a Universe builded by ourselves and for ourselves alone, fruit of the heritage of immemorial lives.

It is indeed the aim and hope of every Buddhist to awaken out of all this dream of life, to enter into that state which, The Master (He whom we call The Buddha, the Awakened) has taught us, lives and reigns beyond this ever-changing and conditioned life. That last awakening, the attainment of Nibbana, is, as it were, the very reason of our Buddhist faith. For the present, in following out the operations of Kamma, we must turn to the life we have and live, remembering always that if in the highest philosophy it is but a dream, it is the dream wherein just now our lives are cast. And the great question now before us is: Can

we mould the life we have so as to make to-morrow's vision nobler, greater, and truer than the life we lead to-day?

It is in the answer to this question that the complement to the half-truth of which I have spoken appears—the understanding so lacking in this Buddhist land, which changes this fatality of Kamma into a power whereby each man may change, not his own destiny alone, but even, in less degree, that of all the world. For that answer is in the affirmative. We may, the Dhamma tells us, so far modify the cause of this our life, the power of Kamma itself, that even in this existence our destiny, our environment may all be changed. "It is," The Master tells us in the Pitaka, "it is through *not-knowing and not-understanding* that we have lived so long in this great ocean of existence, both you and I." And if "not knowing and not understanding" be indeed the source of all this suffering life, then, by

Right Knowledge and Right Understanding we may in all things change the life we live. The change is, not only substituting a brighter, nobler, grander life for the petty path we tread, but even passing beyond the veil which hides from us the Light Eternal, and entering into the Truth which reigns beyond all life.

Only by knowing and by understanding! In all our life we see how true it is, this Teaching of The Master; by knowing and by understanding, if but rightly we apply our knowledge, we may command whatever power we in ignorance obeyed; we may turn every force of Nature to our service; and we may find in each universal law the means to escape from its domination. Men of all ages knew that all things unsupported fell upon the earth, but of the How or Why of this phenomenon they knew naught at all. Then, with Newton's great discovery of universal gravitation came not indeed the understanding, the knowledge of

the Why of gravitation, but somewhat at least of the knowledge of the How. For long, even after Newton's discovery of the nature of this law, it still seemed an impossibility for man to rise above the surface of the earth; until at last it was discovered that gravitation acted also on the air about us, and that it acted less on hydrogen and other gaseous bodies. Once that knowledge was arrived at, it soon was possible to apply it; so that now, by making use of this one piece of knowledge, we can rise by virtue of that very Law of Gravitation as far as there is air enough to balance our apparatus and to sustain our life. For it is the same force of gravitation which pulls the stone towards the earth, that, when directed by right understanding, pushes the balloon away from it. And, as it is in this simple instance, so is it with all right comprehension of each universal law. By knowing and by understanding we may use the very powers

of Nature to produce results seemingly opposite to those they commonly effect.

So is it also with this Law of Kamma which directs our lives. We may employ the very power which conditions us to free ourselves from these conditionings, if we but rightly understand how to apply our knowledge. We know that the chief outcome of that law is that as a man sows, even so shall he reap—that good thoughts and words and deeds bring forth conditions of happiness, and evil ones the reverse. Whilst it is true that at any given moment a man is bound to act only as his character dictates—to choose either good or evil according as the total of the myriad forces of his lives shall compel—it is equally true that he is able, even now and in this life, profoundly to modify by the production of *new Kamma* and its right application, that very character itself. So that, if we but will and understand, we may alter the very destiny

wherewith we are born—alter and change it, whether for better or for worse, at every moment of our lives.

This, then, is the other half of the Teaching about Kamma which is so neglected in Burma at the present day. True, a man's destiny is the inevitable outcome of his bygone action. But even here and now we may alter the very nature of that destiny itself, by hard work, by diligence, by application; we may alter it by applying the knowledge that we have gathered from the Teaching of The Buddha—He whose last words were: *Appamādena Sampādetha.* Sometimes you see two men on whom a similar calamity—say, the loss of all their wealth—falls, and one of them sits down saying: "This is Kamma, my destiny has altered for the bad, it is of no use to strive or work to overcome it"; and the other when that trouble comes, sets once again to work, and by earnest effort builds up a greater

fortune than he had before. Know then that of these two, the former has completely missed the meaning of the Law of Kamma; while the latter has understood it, and knowing thus that Kamma is the fruit of work and of work alone, has made that very affliction the source of new and greater wealth.

And understand full well that this is no unusual case, no special application of the knowledge of what Kamma means. If you are in college, you are even now carrying out this principle into effect; for, as you well know, on your present diligence depends the whole course of your future lives. It is by virtue of the knowledge that you now are gaining that later on you will be able to enter the professions; and if, for any one of you the future shall bring success, that success will be the outcome mainly of your present work. You, even now, are making the destiny of your lives; and as you now sow, so shall you later reap.

You know how, when a new subject of study comes before you, how hard it is at first to apply your minds to it, how great is the effort needed to understand it. It is as though each novel matter needed the making of a new pathway in the brain; and all the difficulty of study, all the difficulty of every function of our lives, depends only on what one may term the inertia of the brain, its opposition to this making of new paths. But if at first you make clear, by hard and careful application, the pathways of a given sort of thought, later it will be always easy for your mind to follow that path; so that at last a given mental process, full at first of all manner of difficulties, becomes so easy that one is scarcely aware of any effort in the doing.

Now in this making of the mental pathways, one thing is noticeable above all others, namely, that the more difficult the process is at first—or, in other words, the more effort

you have to employ at first in clearing away the obstacles—the easier it is later to repeat the process; or, as we say, the better one has learned the thing. So it is also in life. The greater the obstacle to any given thing, as, for example, to such a movement as that to which you have set yourselves, the greater effort, it is true, is needed at first to do it. But if you can but bring yourselves to make that effort, to overcome those obstacles, the success of your work in later life when, leaving this college you go forth into the world to put your principles into action, will be the greater in exact proportion to the very strength of the difficulties you have overcome.

There is a word that is used in medical science which very aptly applies to the two great classes of Kamma—the Kamma coming from our past lives, and the Kamma that we even now are making—whereby, as we have seen, the old-time Kamma may, if we but work

hard enough, be altogether changed. That word is *diathesis*. Suppose a man is born of consumptive parents. That man may be said to have the consumptive diathesis. He has not the disease itself, but some condition of his physical structure predisposes him to contract that disease. Take the man with the consumptive diathesis, and another, born of non-consumptive parents; expose both to the same chance of infection by the bacteria of that disease; and the man with the consumptive diathesis will most likely get consumption and die of it; whilst the other, equally invaded by the same bacteria, will have sufficient resistance to their invasion not even to get ill at all. But on the other hand, if the man with the consumptive diathesis, knowing his heritage, takes great care to avoid all those causes (supposing he knew them) whereby he may be exposed to the invasion of the bacteria, then he may

pass through his whole life without any sign of that disease.

Now, as those of you will know who may have studied the valuable article on the Forces of Character by Maung Shwe Zan Aung in *Buddhism*, there are two very important divisions of Kamma, in respect of the way in which it operates, which are respectively termed Reproductive and Supportive. Reproductive Kamma may be roughly described as that wherewith a man is born, his destiny or fate. This it is which in accordance with his bygone mental action, determines whether he is born rich or poor, noble or base, of great mental capacity or weak of wit; and this Reproductive Kamma corresponds exactly to our medical term diathesis. Setting aside the Supportive Kamma of the past life, and considering only that Supportive Kamma which is built up in the present existence, this latter will correspond to the circumstances under which the actual

contagion of the disease may enter the man. Then, as we have seen, if there is already the diathesis, Reproductive Kamma of the right sort, the result will be that, just as the man in the illustration would have his consumptive diathesis developed into actual disease, so do we, by the Supportive Kamma we now are forming, *develop* those characteristics whether good or bad, with which we are born. Take a child with the most magnificent brain-development possible; place him on an island attended only by savages; and the great possibilities latent in him will remain latent; he will grow up into a savage but little more advanced than those who have nurtured him. Here we have Reproductive Kamma strong for good; but there is no Supportive Kamma present, and thereby the great possibilities are never realised. On the other hand, place the same child at school, and in the learning he there acquires, he will form Supportive Kamma

whereby his birthright may be developed into being; and thus it is always with operations of Kamma in general. Now, in the period of youth, you are making the Supportive Kamma which alone can nurture into life the dormant mental powers wherewith you were born. To the measure that you can by dint of application and hard work bring to fruitage the dormant powers of your Kammic heredity, to that measure your lives on earth will be great or petty, rich or poor, powerful or weak. Your success will be only according as you yourselves—in this period when the powers of your several minds are being ripened by the sun of knowledge to the harvest-time of life—shall work well in the fallow fields of your own hearts and minds, tending the growing seed with diligence, and uprooting the weeds of idleness, of passion, and of sin.

So lies before each human heart in this life's springtide, the potentiality of all that is

to come. Kamma is not your ruler, or the blind arbiter of your destinies or ways; it is your very selves; it is the force which even now you are applying to the making or the marring of a human life. Bow down to it, and you will fall to the state of slavery, slavery to your own ignorance, your own idleness, your folly and despair. You will fall to the living of ignoble lives—lives lived as the life of the brutes—unlit by the privilege of reason whereby comes power to win to all things high. So long as you wrongly think: "Fate is greater than my will," so long shall you remain in servitude to fate, weak, helpless, useless to your fellows, the prey of all those follies of astrology and magic which at this day are one of the most fruitful sources of the lack of stamina and stability of the Burmese race.

But say, but realise in your hearts the Truth. Say: "I am the maker of my life, and builder of my destiny. It is my will to live greatly

and nobly in this world of men; to bring forth happiness where now is suffering; to help the fallen and support the weak. I am lord of this my life, the arbiter of all that life shall bring to me"; and saying thus, work hard to make it true. And so you shall win throughout in the hard battlefield of being. So you shall overcome all obstacles, gaining new strength from each fond weakness set aside. So, most of all, as nearest to your hearts and to the welfare of your race, you shall win the power from Fate to mould the destinies of Burma, to bring new strength to this your nation; the power to carry out the multitudinous reforms among your countrymen which may yet be the salvation of Burma; whereof the foremost in importance stands the right apprehension of all that is involved in the meaning and the application of this Buddhist doctrine of Kamma.

APPENDIX

THE LATE MR. ALLAN BENNETT

BY CASSIUS PEREIRA

WITH the death of Mr. Allan Bennett, (better known in Ceylon and Burma as the Bhikkhu Ananda Maitriya) on the 9th of March, in London, the Buddhist world loses one of its foremost protagonists of late years.

Mr. Bennett was only 50 years old, having been born in London in 1872. He was educated at Bath. His father, a Civil and Electrical Engineer, dying early, the boy was adopted by a Mr. McGregor, whose name the lad took till the former died some years ago. From his childhood a keen student of science, Allan Bennett took up the profession of an Analytical Chemist. He had also done much electrical work, which was just coming to fruition, when his health broke down, and he decided, on medical advice, to go "out East". Always a lover of the East, the forced holiday was not displeasing. He had already become a Buddhist, about his 18th year, his introduction to Buddhism being Sir Edwin Arnold's masterpiece, *The Light of Asia*.

He came out to Ceylon in 1900, and with an introduction from the late Mr. J. E. Richard Pereira, went to Kamburugamuwa, where he studied Pali, for some six

months, under the Ven. Revata Thera, and extended his knowledge of Buddhism. Such was the brilliance of his intellect that, at the end of this short period, he had mastered the ancient Pali sufficiently to converse fluently in that sacred tongue. He made many close friends amongst the Buddhists of Ceylon, who gave him much assistance in every way.

In July, 1901, he delivered his first Buddhist address, an absorbingly interesting one on the "Four Noble Truths," before the Hope Lodge of the Theosophical Society, Colombo. He then decided to enter the Buddhist Order, and as he wished to be ordained in Burma, he left for that country and "renounced the world" at Akyab, in 1901, on his birthday, the 8th of December, as a *Samanera*, or novice, under the name of Ananda Maitriya.

At Akyab he continued his studies, being supported by Dr. Tha Nu of that town, and on 21st May, 1902, the Wesak day, he received the higher Upasampada ordination under the Ven. Shwe Bya Sayadaw.

Going to Rangoon, where the philanthropical Mrs. Hla Oung was his chief supporter, Ananda Maitriya inaugurated the Buddhasasana Samagama, or International Buddhist Society, whose high-class illustrated quarterly magazine *Buddhism*, which he edited, was a credit to all the East.

He visited Ceylon again, and delivered several inspiring addresses at the Maitriya Hall, Colombo, which was named after him.

In 1908, on a visit to England, he helped in launching the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland. On his return to Burma, his health which was always very poor began to fail rapidly. Gall-stone trouble was superadded to the chronic asthma, which first sent him to the East. He was operated on twice, and on the urgent advice of his doctors, he reluctantly decided to leave the Order where he had now attained the seniority of *Thera*, or Elder.

He returned to England just before the Great War began, and was too ill to proceed to the healthful climate of California, as he intended doing. For some time he was extremely ill, but he recovered enough to resume his self-appointed life-work, in London, with the generous help of Mr. Clifford Bax. The Great War had disorganised the Buddhist Society there, but with the help of Mr. W. Arthur de Silva, it was reorganised, and its journal *The Buddhist Review* was restarted with Allan Bennett as editor.

The work, however, was no sinecure. Some assistance was nobly given from Ceylon, Burma and the Anagarika Dharmapala; but Mr. Bennett's health remained precarious, and the position of the Buddhist Society was again getting insecure when Dr. Hewavitarne's munificence, when he visited England last year, again set things right, and ensured regular support for Mr. Bennett.

Advance copies of his latest work, *The Wisdom of the Aryas*, reached Ceylon just three days before his death.

And now the worker has, for this life, laid aside his burden. One feels more glad than otherwise, for he was tired; his broken body could no longer keep pace with

his soaring mind. The work he began, that of introducing Buddhism to the West, he pushed with enthusiastic vigor in pamphlet, journal and lecture, all masterly, all stimulating thought, all in his own inimitably graceful style. And the results are not disappointing, to those who know. *Operæ pretium est.*

(From *The Buddhist*, Colombo, Ceylon,

of 28th April, 1923.)

BUDDHA-HOOD AS AN OFFICE

By Ananda Metteyya

With regard to The Buddha of the *Tisarana*, etc., referring to the *office* rather than to the person, perhaps we should approximate the meaning of the Pali better if we read it: "I go for Refuge or Guidance to Buddha-*hood*." . . .

An important point is, that if a modern Christian apologist in like case were to say that "the Christ," the Redeemer, etc., does not mean the historical person, but the "risen Christ," the redemption-miracle in the heart of the converted man, he would be giving a *real* twist to the clear meaning of the various passages in his Scriptures. In the Gospels, we nowhere find it stated by Christ—save by the widest stretches of the imagination, and inferentially—that there have existed, or do, or will, exist, other "Christs" besides himself; while the parallel statement is over and over again made by The Buddha in the Pitakas, often with detailed reference to a Buddha of such and such a name. This conception, then, of The Buddha in the technical sense being not a *person*, but a *power*, an office of Enlightenment is no new reading or interpretation *of mine*. (How, to one who has realised the Anatta-doctrine, could The Buddha, of all Teachers of Humanity, have appeared as representing the finality, the ultimate Guide and Refuge,

as that *personality* which He so consistently stated was an illusion?) It is no Buddhist apologetic, a twist of the meaning of the Text to make some statement or idea more palatable and acceptable to the modern mind, but an idea which is over and over again detailed in the Buddhist Scriptures. We could hardly, therefore, be fairly accused, even by the most critical of minds, of attaching a meaning to this term which it did not originally possess. Just the contrary, in fact! For The Buddha but seldom spoke of Himself as The Buddha save in the passages where the whole of the Buddha-concept is detailed in the various characteristic signs of Buddha-hood, as in the formula: "Iti pi so Bhagavā Araham Sammāsambuddho," etc. While He often spoke of *other* Buddhas, such as "the Sambuddha Kassapa" or the like, His own usual way of speaking of Himself as the "office-holder," was as the *Tathāgata*, a word which itself enforces the very idea in question, meaning as it does, "He who follows in the footsteps of His predecessors," *Tatha-āgato*: "He who has thus come," even as They came. The rendering is not mine; it is not only in the sources, but in the Commentaries, and in the present expositions of learned Monks. All of these tell us that the personal Gotama "passed into that utter passing-away which leaves nothing whatever behind". All of them, obviously therefore, have another meaning in their minds when they recite the Refuge-formula.

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